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Russia: Yeltsin Addresses Citizens of Budennovsk

MM1804113596 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 18 Apr 96 pp 1-2

[Unattributed account of speech by Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin to Budennovsk residents 17 April, under the general headline: "Russia Knows How To Heal Its Wounds, But the Pain Remains, Compelling Us To Do Everything We Can To Ensure That There Is No Repetition of a Tragedy Like Budennovsk"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Last summer your city was a source of pain for the whole country. This fertile Russian soil witnessed not just a tragedy. The whole of Russia, the whole world witnessed the savage barbarism, unbounded brutality, and appalling behavior of the armed scum who took innocent residents hostage. I bow my head and mourn the memory of the dozens of innocent victims.... I would like to once again voice words of sincere condolence, sympathy, and sorrow to their nearest and dearest....

I consider it my duty to meet with you, residents of Budennovsk, so that we can share together the pain of the tragedy that occurred. You cannot bring back the dead. It is my duty as president to do everything I can to ensure that there is no repetition of this tragedy here or anywhere else in Russia. We received an object lesson in Budennovsk in what may come of failing to take action against bandits and fanatics.

I am talking about terrorists. Those people who have indelibly shamed themselves. They are not freedom fighters but common criminals. Needless to say, we will never equate them with the entire Chechen people. By their inhuman action they cast a slur on and insulted the Chechen people. I realize what a major upheaval this tragedy was for you all. That is why I am here with you.

I cannot fail to say how I see what is happening in Chechnya. In late March I set out my plan for a settlement in an appeal to Russian citizens. Let me be blunt and say that the conception of this plan was no easy matter. The problem of Chechnya has stirred all of society. It is the most acute problem facing all Russia. Every time we have made moves toward peace, Dudayevite extremists have once again put events on a military footing. This happened last year after Budennovsk. Then the peace talks were wrecked by a heinous attempt on the life of Anatoliy Aleksandrovich Romanov, commander of the group of federal troops. The same thing happened early this year. I am referring to Kizlyar and Pervomayskoye. The same thing is happening now. All this provides more and more convincing evidence that the conflict cannot be resolved solely by strong-arm methods or solely by negotiations.

Needless to say, it would be good to withdraw all the federal troops from Chechnya right away. But will that bring peace any nearer? Will it make neighboring areas, including Stavropol Kray, any safer?

I think that the people of Budennovsk know better than many the answer to these questions. Such a move would inevitably result in the dramatic exacerbation of the confrontation within Chechen society, with bloody internecine fighting between the various political and clan groupings ensuing. Given that turn of events there is a real threat of terror spreading from Chechen territory throughout the North Caucasus.

Dudayev's combat squads are one of the pillars of international terrorism today. And there must be no illusions on that score. Western statesmen have long since realized this fact. But some of our compatriots are still unaware of it. I repeat. As president I am responsible for everything that goes on in the country. Therefore I am prepared to do and will do everything I can to restore peace in Chechnya as soon as possible.

Peace is what we want. Chechens need it. Russians need it. Every one of us needs it. Dear fellow citizens, until we erect a reliable barrier to the terrorists' actions, there will be no lasting peace in the republic. Today that is more obvious than ever.

At the same time a settlement in Chechnya will not be secured without negotiations. We favor negotiations. But not with Russia acting from a position of weakness. That is fundamental.

We favor organizing an intra-Chechen dialogue. Free, evenhanded dialogue with no political forces or clan groupings imposing their diktat. Mediators have already been identified.

We have set up a state commission for the settlement of the Chechen crisis, led by Viktor Chernomyrdin. It has already begun work. Needless to say, the plan envisages socioeconomic measures designed to restore the ravaged economy and create normal living conditions for the population.

Let me point out that, having learned from experience, we have done everything necessary to ensure that the aid allocated to the republic reaches strictly those for whom it is destined. We will do everything to ensure that peace comes to Chechnya as soon as possible and that your anxiety fades. And the anxiety experienced by people living in the border areas. Then, I am sure, the doctors and nurses at the new hospital built with

Moscow's most active assistance will never again have to aid the victims of terrorism.

Stavropol Kray is one of the Russian Federation's main strategic regions. You are perfectly well aware of that. I can see that from the messages I receive from Cossacks. There are currently around 300,000 Cossacks in the North Caucasus. They represent a huge force.

Over 1,500 of them have expressed a desire to join the district's military subunits and serve in the Armed Forces on contract. The Terek Cossacks from Pyatigorsk under the command of Ataman Yuriy Churekov are displaying particular activeness. They have stated their readiness to send 350 Stavropol Terek Cossacks to serve in the 21st Airborne Brigade. I believe that Cossack formations will defend Russia's borders and interests in the future as they have done in times gone by. We will accommodate the Cossacks on this score.

There is currently a program for the consolidation [stanovleniye] of the Russian Cossacks. It is a long-term program. It addresses matters pertaining to the employment of Cossacks in state service. Particularly in armed formations. Cossacks have always been notable for their supreme discipline and loyal service to the Fatherland. We are continuing to strengthen the legal base for the revival of the Cossacks. The Russian Federation President's Main Administration for the Cossack Hosts was recently set up in accordance with my edict. It will directly embark on setting up a state register of Cossack societies, organizing Cossack service, and setting benefits and compensation payments.

Another two edicts on the Cossacks have been signed. The first is "On the Procedure for Enlisting Members of Cossack Societies in State and Other Service." It instructs the government, in conjunction with the Federal Border Service, to draft proposals regarding Cossack involvement in guarding the Russian state border. Cossack subunits are being set up within the Federal Forestry Service to fight forest fires.

The second edict is devoted to economic and other benefits for Cossacks who have pledged to perform state service. These benefits include the provision of free land plots in border areas, the allocation of interest-free loans to set up house and build accommodation, and other tax breaks. The government has been given two months to determine the size of the plots, the amount of free aid, and so on.

There have been bleak, tragic episodes in the history of the Russian Caucasus. But something else must not be forgotten either. For it was Russia that played the historic role of creating a single social and economic organism in the region. The most important area of national state policy is to preserve distinctive national cultures to the utmost extent. I attach particular importance to this. The peoples of the North Caucasus have created a unique ethnic and cultural home here. This home is founded on religious tolerance, mutual responsibility, mutual assistance, and close cooperation. I want these traditions to develop and grow stronger.

I am sure that the people of Stavropol Kray will play a very important role in all these processes. This conclusion is based on serious study of your real potential.

Since time immemorial the Stavropol region has grown the best wheat in Russia. And you have always provided around 5 percent of Russia's total grain harvest in any, even the most inclement, weather conditions. Need I mention sheep raising? Stavropol Kray leads the field here too. It produces about 14 percent of the country's wool. For many years your region fed and is still feeding the rest of Russia. Let me say a tremendous thank you for your labors on behalf of myself and all Russian citizens.

Stavropol's grain, wool, fruit, and vegetables are the product of your labors and the labors of your fathers and grandfathers, as well as of your talent, energy, and love of the land.

I believe that your children will without fail continue this great work.

Is there any need to say that the last few years have been difficult for all of us? Some people say that we have tried in vain, that we have expended our efforts in vain, that nothing has — nor will — come of it. They really do not want to see anything come of it, they delight at any mistake, any blunder. Yet at the same time they say that they express the interests of the people.

How they wanted, how they hoped that we would be unable to avert famine in Russia during the first year of the reforms, but they did not see the day. How they hoped that we would be unable to heat the cities, that everything would grind to a halt and freeze, but once again their hopes did not materialize. How they incited people to strife and rebellion, but people paid them no heed. Disappointment again. None of the catastrophes they predicted for Russia took place. Nor will they.

We do indeed suffer from many defects and much disorder, but I will never concede that the reforms were not necessary. They were not the result of an edict or of someone's will — all society realized that we could no longer live in the old ways. This was also realized by the workers who pursued the plan targets month in month out, yet there were fewer and fewer goods in our stores. This was also realized by the peasants, who also pursued the plan, yet our ports constantly admitted shiploads of imported grain. This was also realized by the enterprise leaders, who were sick of cooking the books. This gave rise to the understanding of the need for and inevitability of reforms. Plenty has been accomplished over the last few years. Primarily thanks to our fellow citizens, thanks to your efforts.

Today we are stepping up the social thrust of the reforms. The working man must have a decent life, a decent wage, and good housing. Every Russian citizen must feel secure. As president I shall do everything to ensure that. What do I intend doing? The first thing is to ensure the effective indexation of pay and the prompt payment of wages to budget-sector workers. The first successes have been achieved here and you know about them. This is now the task for joint-stock and private enterprises. The economic levers for this exist.

Second, we must restore order to the payment of pensions and accelerate the development of the system of additional pension provision for citizens. I have set the task of clearing the pension arrears during April and I am monitoring the fulfillment of this task day by day.

Third, we must step up targeted support for Russia's underprivileged citizens.

Fourth, we must step up actions aimed at curbing unemployment. To that end we will use administrative and economic measures to help stimulate enterprises' interest in creating new jobs.

Fifth, we must help cut the strike rate. We will not do this by force, of course. There are levers of social partnership. We will do more to monitor the improvement of working conditions and labor safety procedures and the observance of collective and individual labor agreements.

Sixth, we must help citizens resolve the housing problem. Much has already been said about the measures taken by the state in this regard recently.

Seventh, we must reduce the population's income gap and reduce social inequality.

You know that a number of targeted presidential programs have been adopted to resolve important social and economic problems. Among them I would highlight the "Children of Russia" program. This year it is planned to spend almost 672 billion rubles [R] on its implementation. This really is a lot of money, but we are spending it on our most valued asset — our future, our children.

I believe that a similar program should be adopted for the older generation too. And it will be adopted without fail. By their lives elderly people have deserved extra attention from the state. In their declining years their strenuous and honest labor should be rewarded appropriately. We owe a great debt to veterans. Especially to the veterans of the front who paid a high price to win the great Victory. The state too will be stronger and richer if it increases its spending on those who worked for its benefit all their lives.

Dear people of Budennovsk! Esteemed inhabitants of the Stavropol region!

My visit to the North Caucasus is coming to an end. I have met with workers, kolkhoz members, Cossacks, and servicemen. One reason for visiting you was to resolve a vital question once and for all: What is the best way to help the Russian countryside? This is one of the main questions here in Kuban and the Stavropol region.

Yesterday, as you probably know, I finally agreed and signed the Edict on Measures To Stabilize the Economic Situation and Develop the Reforms in the Agro-Industrial Complex. It envisages the following measures, among others:

— writing off the budget debt of a considerable proportion of agricultural enterprises;

— a 50-percent cut in the price of electricity used for production purposes;

— at least a fourfold reduction in the cost of credit for agro-industrial complex organizations;

— the edict introduces a sequence for payments for deliveries of agricultural produce. They must be made immediately after taxes and wages have been paid;

— the government has been instructed to allocate R800 billion in credits in 1996 to enable peasant and private farms to acquire land;

— beginning in 1997 additional budget resources for the development of leasing funds will be allocated;

— the government will link the rates of customs import duties to the profitability of this country's food production.

I believe these measures will help to revive the Russian countryside. It is my sincere wish that the Stavropol peasant at last breathe more freely and begin to be rewarded more fittingly for his labor. This is how we will act in the future. Using the potential of the market and the democratic state and relying on people's initiative we will move forward step by step.

I want to repeat that the point of my policy is to move via the changes that Russia needs toward prosperity for every family and every Russian. This will be my presidential election platform. It is on this platform that I intend to win. Many contenders for the presidency are promising to resolve all our problems overnight. But there are no easy or quick solutions to our problems.

I am confident that the Russians understand this and I am counting on their common sense and responsibility for the fate of the country. I am not trying to cling onto power, the main thing for me is the rebirth of the new Russia. I am not God. I cannot work miracles. But as president of Russia I feel a tremendous responsibility to you.

Being president of such a great country as Russia is a very heavy burden. Especially at a crucial and vital moment in history. I would be happy to pass the baton into reliable hands. The head of state today must be someone who stands above party and ideological bias.

Election victory must be the result of a real alliance between the contender and the people, not the result of yet another deception based on flashy but untenable slogans. I will do everything possible to ensure that Russia is not plunged into darkness again. I hope you will support me in this.

Your support here, the support of people who have suffered from the Chechen events more than other peaceful inhabitants of Russia, is especially important to me. I really understand your pain, your grief, and the humiliation you have suffered. I promise you that we will never allow this to happen again.

My task as president of the country is to prevent the upheavals that will be inevitable if there is a change of political course. That is why I have decided to fight and win.

I am confident that I shall win. For the sake of us all! For the sake of Russia's future! Russia was, is, and will continue to be!

Long live Russia!

Russia: Yeltsin Seen Gaining Support in Kuban

MM1804104696 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Andrey Aderekhin: "Kuban Cossacks Shout 'Lyubo' to the President and Have a Good Think"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Krasnodar Kray — The level of interest shown by residents of the Kuban in Boris Yeltsin's arrival astounded not only local observers but also the president himself. Though it was late evening, many Krasnodar residents came out of their apartments and lined the route, waiting quite a long time for the presidential motorcade to pass by on its way from the airport. Many people also gathered the following day not only at spots where meetings with the president were planned but also along the roads Boris Yeltsin might use. Interestingly, there were a great many young people among those who wanted to see the president, if only from afar.

The electronic mass media have already reported the shower of gifts timed to coincide with Yeltsin's visit to the Kuban (edicts in support of the agro-industrial complex and the Cossacks, and a great deal else). However, the nature of the president's meetings with the Kuban people was by no means confined to handing out "gifts."

"People no longer feel fear, they tell it the way it is," Yeltsin noted at the end of the visit. Indeed, all the meetings I witnessed certainly did not stand on ceremony — the Kuban residents talked with the president without making any allowance for "rank and title."

Millions of television viewers saw the red file asking Yeltsin to withdraw his candidacy unexpectedly handed over by one veteran.... Even before Yeltsin arrived at the Perpetual Flame, where the meeting took place, this veteran had said he would not shake the president's hand, primarily because of Chechnya. When the motorcade drove up and Yeltsin began to make the rounds of the veterans, shaking each by the hand, the "troublemaker" indeed refused to give the president his hand. Then the following dialogue took place, which I cite from a tape recording.

"My advice to you is to give up the presidency," the veteran said. "Make way for young people."

"I can't give it up.... Whom do you propose?"

"We'll elect somebody. A bit younger."

"But you have to have experience."

"You and I should be picking up our pensions."

"That's a matter of how strong you are," Yeltsin said, and moved on after a pause. His conversation with the other veterans was less fraught. And although Yeltsin promised to allocate them money for the construction of a special home, the candidate for a second term as president by no means tried to indulge everyone over everything.

Thus, in response to insistent requests from veterans to return the money of investors in financial "pyramids," Yeltsin firmly said that the state cannot do this. The president also openly argued with a woman in the village of Novomyshastovskaya.

"Change the prices, give us the old prices, give us back cheap food," the woman asked.

"But was there food to buy in the old days?"

"There was."

"Was there sausage?"

"There was. At 2 rubles 10 kopeks."

"Oh, there was, was there! People used to travel to Moscow for sausage...."

All the indications are that Boris Yeltsin was able to gain many new supporters during the trip. The Kuban is traditionally regarded as a conservative region. However, it is also well known that Kuban people are sober-minded and it is not all that easy to "buy them off." "I'm going to vote for Yeltsin," Dmitriy Molodanov, a Cossack from the village of Novomyshastovskaya, told me. He explained: "Russia has already experienced all too many upheavals. May it smoothly continue its course...."

Most of the Kuban people near the president's car when it made its frequent impromptu halts promised Yeltsin their support in the elections. The couple of dozen representatives of the "Communist opposition" who had freely unfurled anti-Yeltsin slogans and were chanting "Down with the Yeltsin gang!" looked very strange against the general backdrop.

However, it would be wrong to underestimate the Communists' influence, especially deep in the countryside. Having said that, the "aim" of the presidential team that prepared for Yeltsin's visit to the kray in general proved accurate. Most of the villagers don't care who comes to power in June, what counts is that they begin to have a better life. So Yeltsin's emphasis on social policy during the trip, bolstered by calculations and a good knowledge of the region's problems, certainly helped to win a considerable number of votes from the "Zyuganovites." Ultimately people in the Kuban have not forgotten who suppressed the Cossack legacy and de-kulakized their fathers and grandfathers....

Russia: Yeltsin Camp Seen Gravitating Leftward

MM1704153796 Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 16 Apr 96 p 1

[Commentary by Aleksandr Bykovskiy under the "View on Events: Tuesday to Tuesday" rubric: "The People Do Not Need Bloodshed"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Exactly two months remain before the day of the election of the head of the Russian State. The closer this truly historic event in the life of our country comes, the more intense the election struggle between the main contenders for the post of president becomes. You see last week four contenders for the presidential post — G. Zyuganov, B. Yeltsin, V. Zhirinovskiy, and M. Gorbachev — got the right to start their full-scale electoral campaigns.

Judging by reports from the provinces, G. Zyuganov's election campaign is impressive and he is being received exceptionally warmly in all the different regions even though there is a complete news embargo on him by the state and the so-called democratic mass media. And the likelihood of a communist being returned to the Kremlin is so great that even presidential structures admit that a significant proportion of the state apparatus has now, so to speak, gone quiet in anticipation of coming events. This is understandable: The bureaucrats do not want to risk their futures on the eve of a very possible change of power.

Without the slightest doubt, none of this has escaped the Russian president's attention. And it is becoming more and more apparent that he making ever greater demands of the state apparatus. For example the activities in particular of the Federal Labor Inspectorate, which fines enterprise directors for wage delays, have been stepped up. Incidentally, the organs of the prosecutor's office have already brought more than 150 criminal actions for this misdemeanor. The financial structures have been given the task of paying all outstanding pensions in May.

At the same time, efforts are being made to win over to the president those voters who have not yet abandoned the hope of receiving compensation for their savings that were wiped out as a result of the "reforms". B. Yeltsin has signed the Edict "On Measures To Restore the Value of Citizens' Savings," on which the opposition has, incidentally, insisted for a long time now. According to the most conservative official estimates, the state owes its citizens 800 trillion rubles. And now, with two months to go before the presidential elections, the government and the Central and Savings Banks have ordered to draw up in the space of three months a draft Federal Program To Restore the Value of Savings That Were Devalued During the Years of the "Reforms." Basically, it is being proposed that the voters wait once more....

Worried by the potentially poor result for him in the June polls, the organizers of the president's election campaign are becoming more and more active in their attempts to give him a new image — the image of the "father of the nation" who is gravitating toward the currently popular left-wing views. It is with good reason that rumors are becoming more widespread behind the political scenes in Moscow about the president possibly coming forth with an initiative to introduce the post of vice president and offering this post to a representative of the left-of-center sections of Russian society. In this respect, Moscow Mayor Yu. Luzhkov's initiative to make former CPSU [Communist Party of the Soviet Union] MGK [Moscow City Party Committee] Secretary V. Shantsev his deputy in the event of his victory in the city elections, is noteworthy. Yuriy Mikhaylovich [Luzhkov] has always been very sensitive in his reactions to changes in the Kremlin's political moods.

By the way, the idea of socialism is now so popular among Russian politicians that, owing to this, a confrontation occurred last week. The Justice Ministry registered a socialist party whose leader, I. Rybkin, is promising to support B. Yeltsin in the elections. This decision by the ministry gave rise to objections from the leaders of the Socialist Workers Party, who recently decided to change their party's name simply to the Socialist Party and sent the appropriate documents to the Justice Ministry considerably earlier than I. Rybkin.

You also get the impression that his analysts are placing considerable emphasis on the forthcoming May holidays in the Russian president's election campaign. They promise that they will be particularly widely celebrated in Moscow where a whole program has been devised for the occasion, although in recent years the authorities tried their hardest to get the people out of the habit of celebrating 1 May. The "fathers" are not now shunning the venerable capital city nor are they averse to participating in person in "subbotniks" [unpaid mass work on social jobs carried out on a Saturday], which, it would seem, the "democratic" press did its best to ridicule only recently.

However, the Kremlin services evidently understand full well that on their own cosmetic changes in the president's political image will not be enough to secure victory in the elections. The country's economic situation continues to be extremely grave. Among other things the all-Russia peasants' rally that took place in Moscow last week provided evidence of this. Its participants resolutely condemned the "reforms" policy being carried out by the authorities, especially in the agrarian sector, and expressed their unanimous support for the presidential candidate representing the popular-patriotic forces, G. Zyuganov.

All this is compelling the Kremlin to look for unorthodox methods to obtain funds for the extremely underresourced state budget. There is nothing to take from the population, a substantial proportion of which now live below the poverty line. Therefore, state officials are with increasing frequency looking to the commercial structures, which will evidently have to pay up on the eve of the presidential elections. There was a good reason for very clear hints being made to businessmen at a session of the Russian Federation Government Commission on Current Questions that blocks of shares in the largest Russian state enterprises pledged as securities to commercial structures at the end of last year may possibly be returned to state ownership. In other words, if you want B. Yeltsin as president, then you'll have to pay....

Knowing how tight-fisted the "new Russians" are, I doubt if a great torrent of extra funding will stream into the state budget. Which is why you begin to ask yourself more and more whether the authorities will decide to postpone the elections on some pretext or other in connection with the country's grave economic situation. Especially as articles are appearing in the "democratic" press alleging that the communists are ready to take up arms to seize power. But what the press says is nothing! It was announced last week at the highest level that there would be bloodshed in the country if the communists win the presidential elections. So, we, the electors, have serious grounds for thinking hard about who is preparing to shed blood and to whose advantage this is....

No, the elections alone will be able to provide an answer to the question: To the representative of which political force will the people entrust the post of head of state? And only strict observation of the law both on the part of the voters and of the authorities themselves can cure Russia of this most serious socioeconomic affliction and give it hope that it will be saved.

Russia: Yeltsin 'Ready To Do Job' If Reelected

MM1704075496 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 17 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Aleksandr Yevtushenko, Aleksandr Gamov, and Anatoliy Melnikov: "Cossacks Like Yeltsin. But Not All of Them. Russian President Sweeps Through Krasnodar"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Boris Yeltsin flew into the capital of the Kuban late Monday [15 April] night. But the city was expecting him. Youngsters were waving tricolors, drinking beer, and shouting "hurrah!" all along the route taken by the presidential motorcade.

The Communists had rehearsed too. They deployed their slogans, chanting "Down with Yeltsin!"

Next morning the ice between the Krasnodar veterans and the Russian president started gradually melting when Boris Nikolayevich "promised to find" 18 billion rubles to build a 100-home apartment block for Kuban veterans, noting that "I'm not coming empty-handed, they might beat me up."

Yeltsin's supporters arrived soon after, having by some miracle made it through the throng of Communists.

"Don't let the country collapse," they asked Boris Nikolayevich.

"I won't, I won't," he reassured them. "But one thing will be required — vote for me as your president. I am ready to do the job. I have the experience."

So that Krasnodar's voters should have no doubts about Boris Nikolayevich's experience, on visiting the sixth team at the "Rossiya" agricultural firm he presented the agricultural workers with a Don-1500 combine harvester and a truck.

The Kuban people who had come to hear "Ataman Yeltsin" were wheezing and scratching their heads, some of them were distrustfully shrugging their shoulders, and one mustachioed fellow in a Caucasian fur cap somewhat reminiscent of "Esaul" Korzhakov [Yeltsin's security chief] said: "If he doesn't show up, we're sunk."

...A poor corporal, his arms numb with fatigue, had already been holding a glittering cupronickel mace — the Krasnodar Garrison's gift to the president — for around two hours, when somebody shouted "Here they come!" The Cossack colonels and Army generals pulled their stomachs in. That was how Yeltsin's meeting at the Marshal Zhukov Military Camp in Krasnodar began. The camp was built for officers and NCO's from subunits withdrawn from Germany and the Baltic countries.

Understandably, the officers' wives did not let Yeltsin go without asking him about events in Chechnya.

According to the president, the war is over. We now have to think about how to live with Chechnya in the future. We have agreed to grant the republic a very special status and the utmost autonomy in resolving its internal problems. But only within the Russian Federation.

"And I am prepared to discuss this with Dudayev," the president said. "Through intermediaries, of course. I won't be meeting with Dudayev myself. I don't talk to bandits."

Yeltsin expressed hope for support 16 June. But the Cossacks did not want to wait another month, offering their backs for him to sign some presidential edicts on.

"I've never signed edicts under such field conditions," the president said, looking somewhat taken aback. But a table and chair suddenly appeared over the crowd from somewhere, and the edicts on privileges for the Cossacks, on state status for Cossack societies, and on the recruitment of Cossacks to the civil service came into force.

The Cossacks bawled "Nice one!" and the president was admitted as an honorary member of the Kuban Military School [kadetskiy korpus] by acclaim.

Russia: Yeltsin Under Fire From Krasnodar Questioners

LD1604205996 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1800 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Boris Yeltsin is spending this week in the Krasnodar and Stavropol territories. On Tuesday he signed a decree on measures to stabilize the economic situation and develop agrarian reform. The document is aimed at supporting rural producers irrespective of the way in which their production is organized. There are plans to equip peasants and farmers with agricultural technology. The decree relieves rural producers of debt payments and provides for a new goods credit of over 5 trillion rubles. At a meeting with representatives of the Kuban Cossack host, the president signed three decrees on reviving the Cossacks. These documents concern the chief directorate of Cossack troops under the president, the granting of lands to Cossack communities and privileges for Cossack communities which take upon themselves an obligation to serve the state.

Meetings with voters in the streets showed that Boris Yeltsin is by no means restricting himself to festive meetings with supporters.

[begin recording] [Unidentified man] Our lives are nearly over and all we have to live on is your prayers. Our lives are nearly over and all we have to live on is your prayers.

[Yeltsin] Your lives are nearly over? Can that really be true?

[Man] Yes, Boris Nikolayevich, my dear man. So including all the benefits I get 450 rubles.

[Yeltsin] Thousand?

[Man] Yes, including all the benefits. Invalidity benefit and all the rest.

[Yeltsin] Of course, that's ...

[Man, interrupting] And my advice to you, if you want to keep your health is to give up the presidency, Boris Nikolayevich ...

[Yeltsin, interrupting] That I cannot agree to.

[Man] Can't?

[Yeltsin] No. [man chuckles] So whom do you propose?

[Man] Oh, we will elect somebody.

[Second man] One of the young people.

[First man] We need to elect somebody a bit younger.

[Yeltsin] So that's it? Well, they will have to have experience.

[First man] Do you think we would elect someone with no experience? Our young people are intelligent people. But you and I are ripe for our pensions.

[Yeltsin] Well, that depends how fit you are.

[First man] It's the truth, Boris Nikolayevich.

[Yeltsin] No.

[Second man] Your crowd have done the people here a lot of harm.

[Yeltsin] Well, what do other veterans think about that? Uh?

[First man] We are hoping that you will help us, Boris Nikolayevich. The law on veterans is still far from perfect. It's a matter of [words indistinct as Yeltsin interrupts unintelligibly] millions of rubles. I think you will help us on this matter so that this law on veterans [words indistinct].

[Yeltsin] Well, you see, the way things are the State Duma passed a law on veterans. Under the constitution, before a law which entails financial matters can be passed, it needs to be approved by the government but they [Duma] did not submit it to the government for approval. Now, in order to pay out money in accordance with the law on veterans, we would have to spend the whole Russian budget on it. We cannot. We are now looking for a way out of this situation. [end recording]

Russia: Roundup on Yeltsin's Stay in Krasnodar

LD1604185596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1824 GMT 16 Apr 96

[By Viktor Zhilyakov and Andrey Surzhanskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KRASNODAR, April 16 (Itar-Tass) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin spent a busy day in the Krasnodar territory on Tuesday.

Having left his residence in Hotel Platan at dawn, he met a group of war and labour veterans an hour later. The veterans reminded the President that it was his first visit to Krasnodar although he had visited one part of the territory — Kuban — many times in the past.

The frank conversation between the President and the people who had gone through many joys and sorrows in their lives culminated in Yeltsin's promise to mobilise 18 billion roubles in order to build a new Home for Veterans in Kuban.

The President then travelled to a military settlement which was built to accommodate the families of the officers and non-commissioned officers of the units withdrawn from the places of deployment of the country's Western, Central and Northern armies and the Baltics, as well as the units taking part in operations in Chechnya.

Yeltsin was shown around the new blocks of houses and supported the idea of enlarging the settlement.

During his meeting with local Cossacks, Yeltsin signed three decrees on the development of the Cossack communities in Russia and their participation in the state service.

The President subsequently left Krasnodar to visit rural inhabitants in the village of Novomyshastovskaya of the Krasnoarmeisky district. The agricultural firm Rossia located in the district grows and processes 151 varieties of crops.

En route there, Yeltsin made a stopover near the threshing floor where members of the team led by Hero of Socialist Labour Alexei Temchura were working.

The president next accepted the invitation to lunch in the house of another team leader, Pavel Naumenko and visited the home of the man who is proud both of his labour achievements and of his large family.

After the lunch, Yeltsin rode to the administrative centre of the agricultural firm to address a meeting of of its managers and workers.

Just as expected by inhabitants of Kuban, Russia's traditional agricultural region, the President chose the place as the venue for making public the basic principles for the development of Russia's agriculture and for signing a decree supporting its development.

In the afternoon, the President addressed a meeting of representatives of public organisations of the Krasnodar territory. He also read out a decree on measures to ensure the Krasnodar territory's comprehensive development in the period from 1996 to the year 2000.

Responding to an Itar-Tass question, the territory's chief administrator Yevgeniy Kharitonov said he was "personally grateful to Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin" for his meetings with inhabitants of Kuban and for his understanding of the problems impeding the territory's development.

According to Kharitonov, the President heard some very unpleasant questions but never sought to avoid answering them.

Kharitonov said it was impossible to overestimate the President's decree mandating support for the further development of the Krasnodar territory. The decree took two years to prepare, Kharitonov said.

On Tuesday evening, the Russian President left Krasnodar for the Stavropol territory where he was expected to relax in one of the local health centres overnight before leaving for Budennovsk on Wednesday morning.

Russia: Ufa Gives Zyuganov Hearty Welcome

MK1804084996 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 17 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Viktor Khamrayev from Ufa: "Ufa Met the General Secretary as a Dear Person. City Residents Found Zyuganov To Be a 'Good Guy'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Thanks to the zeal and far-sightedness of the Bashkir president's administration, the republican cabinet of ministers, and State Assembly deputies, Gennadiy Zyuganov's planned canvassing tour to Ufa has acquired all the hallmarks of an official visit.

Unlike Samara, where the day before an interest in him was shown only by the local CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] branch, the sovereign Republic of Bashkiria observed all of the proper protocol ceremonies to welcome the "boss" from the center. The city traffic was stopped for the whole day along the entire motorcade route, and at each crossroads pre-posted policemen saluted the cars rushing by.

Early in the morning, at the railroad terminal Mr. Zyuganov was welcomed not only by young women in traditional costumes with bread and salt [offered to guests as a symbol of hospitality] and CPRF activists with the "Vote for Zyuganov" streamer, but also by Ismatil Gabitov, head of the Bashkir president's administration, who, as a matter of fact, had personally approved the program of CPRF leader's stay in Ufa. At the railroad terminal, the cabinet of ministers was represented by Press Minister Galim Khisamov. As for the State Assembly, true, it did not send its representatives to meet the train, but this was probably because Mr. Zyuganov was going to speak before the deputies immediately after breakfast.

The meeting with legislators was attended by all of the top administrators, president's administration staffers, government officials, and heads of Ufa rayons' administrations. The reception seemed to have stunned the Communist leader so much that, while making his canvassing speech, he called his supporters "a bloc of statehood-minded and patriotic forces." After this, he educated the Bashkir authorities about the advantages of "a single power" that should replace the present constitutional principle of the division of powers. Mr. Zyuganov assured the audience that he fully supported the principle of constitutional federalism. In addition, the CPRF leader admitted that the reason why the CPSU [Communist Party of the Soviet Union] and the USSR disintegrated was the monopoly of the [Communist] party for property, power, and the truth. At the same time, Mr. Zyuganov noted that the CPSU was in fact not a party but "a system of country administration," and to destroy a system is a crime. In this connection, Gennadiy Andreyevich [Zyuganov] thanked the local authorities for "having retained administration structures." The apparatchiks were listening to the number one candidate with a genuine interest although refrained from an applause.

The following part of Mr. Zyuganov's visit to Ufa was rather standard. The candidate laid flowers to a monument to Lenin, dropped in at major enterprises, made unexpected stops and stepped out of the car to meet people, and spoke before Ufa residents at the Yubileynyy palace of culture. At the same time, while addressing various audiences with the same one-and-a-half-hour speech about his electoral intentions four times a day, Mr. Zyuganov exhibited his wonderful memory capacity, enviable for any actor, as regards the text, intonation, and gestures.

The Ufimkabel [Ufa cable] Joint-Stock Company has prepared for a meeting with a would-be president in an excellent way: freshly painted walls in its shops were still wet. As for its roll of honor, decorated with sickles and hammers, it must have reminded the CPRF leader about many things, the more so since in 1900 in the same factory building Vladimir Lenin also held a meeting with Ufa social democrats. Mr. Zyuganov thanked factory workers for having maintained every single percent of their productivity level in the past five years. The factory workers were also thankful to the general secretary for the payment of two-month arrears of their wages on the eve of his visit.

The Ufa meat processing and packing factory demonstrated its new production lines, and in the city stores the candidate observed abundance of goods and discovered that "the prices are just like in Moscow," making a comment only about a costly imported cognac.

After the meeting with Mr. Zyuganov, Ufa people went home saying that he was "a good guy." A woman working at the Ufimkabel Joint-Stock Company even said that he was "a great guy," but said, when asked about her electoral preferences, that she would vote "for Yeltsin, of course." Today, Chelyabinsk is next in turn to receive Zyuganov.

Russia: Zyuganov Ends Election Trip to Volga, Urals

LD1704200996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English
1957 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 17 (Itar-Tass) — Russia's communist presidential hopeful Gennadiy Zyuganov ended his canvassing trip to Samara, Ufa and Chelyabinsk on Wednesday.

A congress of the Urals' popular patriotic forces, which was held in Chelyabinsk today, unanimously supported Zyuganov and his election platform. The congress urged its participants to reach out to each of those 30-40 percent of voters who have not made up their mind yet.

Zyuganov's meetings with voters in the towns of Novokuibyshevsk and Chapayevsk and in a number of rural areas in the Samara region were held under the "Fatherland in Danger" motto.

The communist leader spoke about economic hardships, the impoverishment of the population and soaring crime rates.

He announced his programme of resolving the present crisis. Its key provisions call for the normalisation of energy prices and transportation tariffs, a new economic policy, the exemption of enterprises from the tax burden, fighting crime and overall support for culture, education and science.

In Ufa on Tuesday, Zyuganov was given a red-carpet reception and invited to speak in one of the largest halls in the city where the heads of practically all city and district administration, the directors of major enterprises and institutions gathered to welcome their candidate.

Russia: Zyuganov Not Received by Chelyabinsk Workers, Criticizes Media

LD1704174596 Moscow NTV in Russian
1500 GMT 17 Apr 96

[From the "Segodnya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] In Chelyabinsk, Russian presidential candidate Gennadiy Zyuganov was to have met the staff of several enterprises, including workers at the pipe-rolling works. However, literally the day before the meeting, the works refused to receive the leader of Russia's communists. [Video shows Zyuganov on walkabout, addressing meeting, laying flowers]

Gennadiy Zyuganov thinks that the participants in the election race have been placed in unequal positions. The fight is by no means always being conducted in an honest and civilized fashion. The mass media were also mentioned.

[begin Zyuganov recording] You can open the first page of SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA, where it publishes the means of how to fight against our bloc and us, first and foremost using the mass media. I personally have never read a more cynical and barbaric document. [end recording]

Gennadiy Zyuganov expounded his ideas during a 90-minute news conference held in the regional duma this morning. Despite the pipe-rolling works' refusal to have a meeting with Zyuganov, the presidential candidate had a packed program in Chelyabinsk. He visited the watch works, met regional leaders and entrepreneurs, and laid flowers — as he had done in Ufa, although this time he did so at the eternal flame — and appeared in a live program on local television.

In Gennadiy Zyuganov's opinion, a state of emergency would have to be introduced in order to wreck the elections. This is possible only if no less than half of the population of the country supports the idea. In addition, the Army and the power structures have to be reliable. Such conditions do not exist in Russia today.

For this reason, Gennadiy Zyuganov thinks that any attempts to cancel or postpone the June presidential elections will be nothing other than an adventure. At the same time, according to information at the disposal of the Russian Communist leader, some forces are nevertheless preparing a plan to wreck the elections.

Gennadiy Zyuganov yet again harshly criticized the economic policy of the current government today, promising that if he becomes president he would first and foremost defend the interests of Russian producers.

Russia: Gorbachev Launches Campaign in Siberia

LD1704193496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English
1926 GMT 17 Apr 96

[By Viktor Yelmakov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Novosibirsk, April 17 (Itar-Tass) — Ex-Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev began his election campaign with a trip to Siberia on Wednesday.

Speaking at a press conference before his departure to Novosibirsk, Gorbachev said, in response to questions about his low ratings in public opinion polls, that he doubted their trustworthiness.

He said that he will attract many new supporters when the time of the main poll comes.

Gorbachev, registered a forth presidential candidate last week, said that groups of his supporters have emerged practically in all regions of Russia over a fairly short period of time.

He told journalists that their representatives will meet in Moscow tentatively on April 27.

During his stay in Novosibirsk, Gorbachev will meet regional governor Vitaliy Mukha, the students of the local technical university and the public. He will also appear on local television.

Apart from Novosibirsk, Gorbachev's tour, which will last until April 25, will include Krasnoyarsk, Irkutsk, Ulan-Ude, Kemerovo, Barnaul and Omsk.

Russia: Buryat Leadership Refuses Gorbachev Right To Campaign

LD1804060896 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0454 GMT 18 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksey Subbotin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ulan-Ude, 18 Apr (Itar-Tass) — The leadership of Buryatia has refused Mikhail Gorbachev, officially registered presidential candidate for the Russian Federation, the right to campaign on the territory of the republic. President of Buryatia Leonid Potapov sent a telegram to this effect to the ex-president of USSR, who is conducting his election campaign in Siberia. The decision is due to "a very intensive schedule of official engagements" in which the republican authorities are involved, the telegram says.

The ITAR-TASS correspondent was told at the Buryatia presidential press service that the telegram was in reply to a message received from Gorbachev, in which he announced his intention to visit the republic in the nearest future in order to meet the electorate and the president of Buryatia.

Apart from Ulan-Ude, the program of Gorbachev's tour, which will last till 25 April, includes Novosibirsk, Krasnoyarsk, Irkutsk, Kemerovo, Barnaul, and Omsk. At the moment he is on visit in Novosibirsk.

Russia: Yavlinskiy's Presidential Chances Seen Dwindling

MK1804121496 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 18 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Marina Shakina under the "Theories" rubric: "Democrats Engaged in a Tug-of-War. Yavlinskiy Appeals to Yeltsin; Belyayev, to Yavlinskiy"]

[FBIS Translated Text] While Gennadiy Zyuganov is quietly touring the Russian regions, having secured his rear and taking every conceivable advantage of his status as an opposition leader, the democrats, democratic centrists, and liberals are locked in a tug-of-war. Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, who has clearly gotten off to a late start in his election campaign, is in the center of this democratic bustle. The democrats' dilemma — Yeltsin or Yavlinskiy — has over the past few months acquired a couple more "overtones" — Mikhail Gorbachev, for instance, whose platform is close to the "third force," has made a powerful spurt from the start. He was the first politician of the "democratic center" to be registered as a presidential candidate, and now he is explicitly, albeit tactfully, emphasizing his informal superiority — the wisdom of age, experience as a trailblazing reformer, worldwide renown, and equally impressive authority.

Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, who has over the past few days been clearly preoccupied with the submission of his signature lists to the Central Electoral Commission, has made few noteworthy steps or statements. His current electoral tactic boils down to the promotion of "I in the second round." Under this sociological hypothesis, Yavlinskiy alone can defeat Zyuganov, being the most unobjectionable candidate for the voters (just like Mikhail Romanov, who was crowned precisely owing to his harmlessness, evident to everyone). That is, if Yeltsin lays claim to the title of the "lesser evil," Yavlinskiy turns out to aspire for "the greatest acceptability."

Hence his recent call on Yeltsin to withdraw his candidacy in favor of Yavlinskiy. Since Gennadiy Zyuganov's ardent followers are urging the current president to do just that, it becomes clear that at least the Communists did not buy this hypothesis and are not afraid of encountering Yavlinskiy in the second round.

Yavlinskiy's call in this situation looks more like an advertising trick, because there have been reports that privately and in an unofficial surrounding Yavlinskiy does not even attempt to put on a triumphant air. Yet the "Yabloko" leader continues scoring points locally: Vyacheslav Shostakovskiy's Democratic Alternative, even if it may not be a particularly influential party, has announced its support for his candidacy. Even the fact that Russia's Democratic Choice — thanks to Sergey Kovalev and Arkadiy Murashev — has not yet discarded the possibility of cooperation with "Yabloko" is also to Yavlinskiy's credit.

On the other hand, Yavlinskiy's lengthy and as yet inconclusive talks with Lebed and Svyatoslav Fedorov should obviously be listed among his liabilities. The much-touted — albeit by the press, not by their participants — talks cannot result in nothing, because this would deal a painful blow to the authority of the "Yabloko" leader — not Lebed or Fedorov, but precisely Yavlinskiy, who has already earned the reputation as a "capricious boy."

As for Boris Yeltsin, his election campaign continues gathering momentum, concurrently mounting psychological pressure on the "Yabloko" candidate. In response to Yavlinskiy's call on Yeltsin to withdraw his candidacy, several similar calls and hints have been leveled at Yavlinskiy, albeit not by Yeltsin himself.

Sergey Belyayev did it for Yeltsin on Kamchatka. Irina Khakamada, for her part, described in a quiet, analytical manner how Yavlinskiy could involuntarily play into the Communist leader's hand — according to the pattern that worked in the Duma speaker's election.

In the meantime, polls — regardless of who conducts them — show that the choice between Yeltsin and Zyuganov has only compounded the polarization of society. Pollsters can err, of course — this is not that inconceivable. But this is also true with regard to the "second round" theory on which the "Yabloko" leader is currently building his case.

The feeling is that Grigoriy Yavlinskiy has so far been dragging his feet and that by mid-May he will find himself running the fiercest race against time, which will be devastating for his election goals.

Yet it is possible that at the bottom of his heart he has already decided to content himself with a new role whose outlines were drawn by democratic ideologists some time ago — a clearly impassable candidate fielded on principle in view of his long-term prospects. This image has its pros, but they are outweighed by very considerable cons, the most important of them being as follows: First, there is no guarantee that the next elections will take place at all, as some observers think; and, second, there is no guarantee that the democrats will reach agreement and continue "to groom" jointly their selected long-term candidate until the next elections, even if they do take place.

Russia: Reports of Yavlinskiy-Fedorov-Lebed Coalition Dismissed

LD1704132996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1157 GMT 17 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Svetlana Lebedeva, Viktor Troyanovskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] NOVGOROD, April 17 (Itar-Tass) — General Aleksandr Lebed standing for the Russian presidency on Wednesday dismissed media reports about the creation of the "Yavlinskiy-Fedorov-Lebed" coalition bloc as "premature." "Such work is under way, but one should not expect any results earlier than in mid-May. Unless the situation is clarified any statement to this effect is out of the question," Lebed said at a news conference held on the occasion of a presentation ceremony of his new book "I am sorry for my state."

Lebed said that he expected the Central Electoral Commission to announce its conclusion on registering Lebed a candidate to the Russian presidency on April 19. According to Lebed, documents submitted to TsIK, including 1,919.000 signatures collected in his support, are "all right".

Although there are only around 3,000 signatures collected in his support in the Novgorod region it is from this region that Lebed begins his canvassing campaign. In Novgorod, he intends to "breath in the air of Russian history," Lebed was quoted as saying.

General Lebed outlined his views on ways of improving the situation in this country, saying that he believes there are three ways to do so: a strong master, strong power vested with professionals and low taxes. Lebed said that he would not embark on the course of sweeping radical measures if he won the elections, but would prefer "quiet reforms based on common sense and a scientific approach."

On Wednesday, Lebed will visit a number of enterprises in Novgorod, meet students and teachers of the Novgorod Agricultural Academy and meet Novgorod residents at the "Dialogue" public center.

Russia: Supreme Court Upholds Order on Bryntsalov's Candidacy

LD1704193296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1903 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 17 (Interfax) — Vladimir Bryntsalov, MP and businessmen worth billions of rubles, must be registered by the Central Electoral Commission as candidate for presidency as early as Thursday.

A Russian Supreme Court official told Interfax that Inna Sergeyeva, deputy chairperson of the court, signed a ruling Wednesday rejecting the Central Electoral Commission's complaint and upholding the court's order of April 10 under which the commission had to register Bryntsalov.

The Supreme Court has been scrutinizing the complaint since April 12. For this reason the execution of the court order was suspended.

Russia's Supreme Court is the final court of appeal for all civil and criminal cases not involving interpretation of the Russian Constitution.

Russia: Main Presidential Candidates' Chances Viewed

MM1704130196 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI ("Political Wednesday" section) in Russian 17 Apr 96 p II

[Article by Vladimir Guliyev: "'Third Force' or "'Fifth Column?'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The fact that forecasts are unreliable and political forecasts are a doubly thankless task has long been a truism, indeed a commonplace. But something else is also true: The complete rejection of a political forecast goes against human nature. After all, to err is human (as the old saying goes) precisely because of man's ineradicable inclination to predict the future, to take a least a glimpse into it.

On what should we rely and what should we dance to, so to speak? We should rely on indisputable facts and factors of the present day (and the recent past). On common sense and general ideas about our country and its people and about what is called the Russian electorate. And, finally, on a fine human characteristic — intuition. We define it as the ability to make at least partly correct decisions when there is an obvious shortage of information.

What can we observe in the election race in its most general features? First, it seems to me, a sound, that is, not precarious, "gaining of altitude" by Boris Yeltsin. Second, voters' growing awareness of the danger of communist restoration. Third, an obvious crisis in the camp of the democrats which, incidentally, is no longer a single "camp" but rather two wings — the "pro-Yabloko" wing and the pro-Yeltsin wing.

In turn the desire to form a "third force" (in general the typical confrontation of two movements which obviously dominate in society) given the immaturity and irresponsibility of the sociopolitical orientations still inherent in Russia is developing into the predominance now of one grouping, now of another laying claim to the main role. So that there is not one "third force" and not two, but at least three or four. It is true that there is little that unites them apart from their common "intermediate" status.

The first of them is Mr. Yavlinskiy with the "Yabloko" [acronym forms letters for Russian word for "apple"] which he has promised the people in the form of "correct" reforms. The only thing is I fear that this "apple," to paraphrase the old revolutionary song, may roll "into the Cheka and not come back." In splitting the reformist camp or to be more precise chopping off part of the electorate from it, Yavlinskiy is acting not in the role of a "third force" (or the "fifth corner" as he put it recently) but, I fear, in the role of a "fifth column" which is attacking not to the front but the rear. Thus opening up the way to the Cheka-CPSU with all their famous attributes.

General A. Lebed expressed himself more or less like this a month ago: "It is important not to gain altitude too rapidly but to do so smoothly and reliably." Perhaps he has the chance of some success. But I think he has no chance of winning. In Russian history military men have often overthrown statesmen or brought them to power, but no more than that. To become Napoleon you must be not so much a general as a genius. The same applies to Charles de Gaulle. Aleksandr Lebed, however, for all his undoubted intelligence and a certain charisma, is obviously not ready to manage the country and is in no way a universal idol.

Mikhail Gorbachev, on the one hand, and Svyatoslav Fedorov on the other represent respectively the right and left social-democratic alternative in its postcommunist interpretation. If we proceed from the well-known sociological theory of social roles then they are the "nonfavorites" who will lend the election campaign additional democratic features of pluralism and breadth of choice, but no more.

But the person whose chances are now underestimated by many people is Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. And it is not only a case of his graphically expressed capability and ability — if you like the art of providing surprises — as the objective situation created by the confrontation by the two dominant forces — Boris Yeltsin heading the "democratic centrist" and Gennadiy Zyuganov with his communist-chauvinist coalition (they are no socialist or patriots, those concepts come from civilized vocabulary, not the vocabulary of pogroms).

So the intensive confrontation between influential forces predominating on the political landscape opens up some (and I fear not small) opportunities for Zhirinovskiy. On the eve of the December parliamentary elections many observers predicted the LDPR [Liberal Democratic Party of Russia] would leave the political foreground and they were seriously mistaken. Now its chances, I am convinced, are increasing, and very substantially at that. Why?

Because, first, many of the people who voted for the CPRF in December are not Communists but do not accept the present power. Now that the danger of communism is here, Zhirinovskiy's anticommunism is a kind of outlet for many people who have known the pleasure of "developed socialism" but who have a negative attitude toward the present authorities. So that I would not advise, in the game of chance of the struggle against the threat of communist revenge, forgetting the extreme right-wing opponent of democracy. V. Zhirinovskiy's words at the 29 March press conference: "We must let Yeltsin and Zyuganov fight and you will see the political ground will be cleared" — those words are those of a real politician who has never died in V.Zh. the public actor and who is alive to this day.

And some last observations. There are fewer and fewer people left who treat good and evil with indifference. When the entire people vote that is both gratifying and terrifying. Gratifying because it is democracy in action. Terrifying because a mistake then results in tragedy.

Let us not make a mistake!

Russia: Electoral Commission To Question Yeltsin, Zyuganov

LD1704164896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1230 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 17 (Interfax) — The Central Electoral Commission has several questions to put to current President Boris Yeltsin and leader of the Communist Party Gennadiy Zyuganov, since they have attracted officials engaged in state service as their representatives at the elections, deputy chairman of the Central Electoral Commission Aleksandr Ivanchenko told a press conference at the Interfax main office Wednesday.

In line with election law, any officials engaged in state service "have no right to use advantages of their official state in favor of one or another candidate," Ivanchenko said.

This concerns not only the leaders of federal and local executive power bodies who will be representatives of the current president but many deputies of Russia's State Duma who have become representatives of the Communist Party leader.

The Central Electoral Committee will act to ensure equal conditions for all participants in the presidential elections.

A total of 4 billion rubles out of the total of almost 1 trillion rubles allocated from the budget for presidential elections will be allotted to all registered candidates for their pre-election campaigns.

The Central Electoral Commission receives these funds irregularly, each time only "a teaspoonful," but Ivanchenko hopes that the whole sum will be at the disposal of the Central Electoral Commission by this June. Yeltsin and Zyuganov have already received 150 million rubles each for their pre-election campaign.

On the topic of the conflict between the Central Electoral Commission and candidate to the Russian presidency Vladimir Bryntsalov, Ivanchenko said that execution of the Supreme Court decision dated April 10 and obliging the Central Electoral Commission to register Bryntsalov has been suspended.

The Central Electoral Commission refused to register Bryntsalov due to irregularities in signature collection. The supreme body, the presidium of Russia's Supreme Court, will consider the issue in the form of supervision. The presidium is to gather in the near future. It will make a final decision, Ivanchenko said.

Russia: Only 17 Presidential Candidates Manage To Submit Documents

LD1704154896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1222 GMT 17 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Igor Belskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW April 17 (Itar-Tass) — Only 17 out of 78 presidential candidates have managed to submit documents for their official registration. In accordance with the law on elections, the Central Electoral Commission stopped accepting the documents on April 16, including lists with signatures (there should be no less than one million signatures in support on a candidate).

The names of all the presidential candidates will be made public before April 26. So far the Commission registered only four: Gennadiy Zyuganov, Boris Yeltsin, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and Mikhail Gorbachev. The registration of Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, Aleksandr Lebed, Svyatoslav Fyodorov and Artyom Tarasov will be discussed next Friday. The remaining candidates will be discussed afterwards.

Two candidates — Vladimir Bryntsalov and Martin Shakkum — were denied registration by the Central Electoral Commission. They did not agree with it and are working for having it reconsidered.

Sixteen presidential candidates officially notified the Commission that they had changed their mind and no longer intended to run for president. Some 20 initiative groups for collecting signatures, that were registered before the beginning of March, dropped their work. Thus, the number of contenders has been reduced fourfold in comparison with the initial figure.

CIS: Interior Ministers Sign Resolution, Conclude Session

LD1804102196 Dushanbe Radio Tajikistan Network in Tajik 0800 GMT 18 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The session of the council of CIS interior ministers ended its work today.

On the last day of the session, the heads of the aforementioned ministries signed a joint resolution of the participants of the session. It identifies clearly their activity in future cooperation. The participants in the session agreed that the host minister will be elected head of the council. That is why Saidamir Zuhurov, interior minister of the Republic of Tajikistan, was elected chairman of the Council of Interior Ministers until the next session, which is due to be held in Chisinau in October.

After the session ended, its participants held a news conference for domestic and foreign journalists.

CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 18 Apr

LD1804055896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0504 GMT 18 Apr 96

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW April 18 (ITAR-TASS) - Follows a review of Thursday's Moscow-based Russian newspapers dated April 18.

IZVESTIYA analyses the situation on the imported goods market.

Last year the State Trade Inspectorate rejected 58 percent of the entire amount of imported sausages and meat, 56 percent of canned food, and 36 percent of butter.

Over the past two years, the share of imported goods in Russia's retail trade turnover has increased from 19 to 54 percent. An item concerning the protection of Russia's consumers' market from subquality imported commodities is to be discussed at a governent meeting on Thursday, the newspaper points out.

IZVESTIYA on Duma Speaker's letter to the President.

The newspaper runs a facsimile copy of some points of State Duma Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev's letter to Russian President Boris Yeltsin. In the letter Seleznev lobbies in favour of private interests against State ones, and upholds the rights and interests of the shareholders of the ROSELTRANS joint-stock company.

Why Duma Speaker does so is examined by Otto Latsis in an article headlined "The State Duma and State property. An unexpected turn in the struggle for the recarving of the pie".

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA on the Chechnya situation.

"There is no and cannot any victors in this war" is the headline under which the newspaper carries an interview with Aslan Maskhadov, Chief of Staff of Dudayev forces, who sets out his version of the latest developments in Chechnya and around it.

Touching upon the President Yeltsin's programme for a settlement of the Chechnya situation, Maskhadov regards "the possibility of talks between Yeltsin and (Dzhokhar) Dudayev as the most valuable aspect of the programme." Maskhadov believes that the talks could be started a withdrawal of Federal troops from Chechnya begins.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA on President Yeltsin's tour of Kuban and Stavropol Territories.

The newspaper refers to "State support for the agro-industrial sector and the Cossacks" as the chief result of the tour.

Izvestiya also reports Yeltsin's trip to Budennovsk, his meetings with ordinary folks and regional leaders.

IZVESTIYA on G8 summit opening in Moscow on Saturday.

Several days before the leaders of G7 countries and Russia meet in the Kremlin to discuss nuclear safety issues, the newspaper describes a programme for the stay of the Heads of State in Moscow.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA on purposes and tasks of the forthcoming G8 summit.

The newspaper runs an interview with Vladimir Petrovskiy, Director-General of the UN European Office, UN Under-Secretary-General, and General Secretary of the Conference on Disarmament, who speaks about the purposes aand talks of the forthcoming G8 summit.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA on bankruptcy.

Under the headline "On the benefit of bakruptcy", the newspaper carries an interview with Petr Mostov, General Director of the Federal Office for Insolvency (bankruptcy) Affairs, who dwells on the benefit of bankruptcy for the State and for the rank-and-file worker, who gets his wage arrears finally repaid.

ROSSISKIYE VESTI on the platform of the Russian Communist Party.

Under the headline "The Communists expound a civil war philosophy", the newspaper analyses the political and ideological platform of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation and its leader Gennadiy Zyuganov.

"The Communists speak about world socialism's getting the 'second wind'. The calls 'to recreate the Power's might' and Zyuganov's remarks about the 'idealism' and 'spiritual purity' of our people and about their "heart-felt impulses" are nothing new. In Russian history, this has always resulted in the oppression of the people," the newspaper points out.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA on Russia's Black Sea Fleet.

The Black Sea Fleet is capable of accomplishing the assigned tasks, Admiral Viktor Kravchenko, Commander of the Fleet, has told the newspaper.

Kravchenko summed up the results of the recent exercises which involved 50 ships, more than 100 units of combat hardware and 3,000-strong personnel.

Touching upon the structure of the Black Sea Fleet, the Admiral pointed out the need to establish two gropus of the fleet — an eastern one in the Caucasus and a western one in the Crimea.

PRAVDA on health insurance.

The problems and successes of Russia's health insurance system are the main subject of an interview with Aleksandr Tsaregorodtsev, Russian Minister of Health and the Medical Industry.

According to the Minister, "more than 100 million people have been provided health insurance under contracts with health insurance agencies, and over 80 million people have received insurance policies".

Russia: INTERFAX Previews Nuclear Summit, Clinton Itinerary

LD1704112696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1002 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 17 (Interfax) — The Moscow summit on nuclear security will open on April 19. Russian President Boris Yeltsin will have a number of bilateral meetings with summit participants on the same day, sources at the summit's main press center told Interfax.

Under the preliminary program, Yeltsin will meet prime ministers of Canada, Japan and Great Britain, the president of France, the German federal chancellor and the head of the EU Commission on April 19. Later on that day the leaders will attend a working dinner in the Grand Kremlin Palace and a concert at the St. George hall.

The nuclear summit will be held from 10 a.m. through 3 p.m. on April 20 in Kremlin. A final news conference by Russian and French presidents Boris Yeltsin and Jacques Chirac, co-chairmen of the summit, will be held on April 20 in the afternoon. According to preliminary reports, leaders of other states participating in the summit will hold their news conferences on the same day.

On April 20 Yeltsin will have bilateral meetings with Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma and the Italian prime minister.

On April 21 Yeltsin and U.S. president Bill Clinton will have a meeting in Novo-Ogaryevo, the Moscow region.

Some 1,400 correspondents have been accredited to the summit. The overall number of correspondents covering the summit is expected to reach 2,000-2,500.

Russia: Soskovets, Pickering Discuss Agenda for Nuclear Summit

MK1704083596 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Natalya Nikina: "Soskovets Receives Pickering. They Discussed Preparations for the Upcoming Summit"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Questions of economic cooperation and preparations for the Moscow summit on nuclear security were discussed at a meeting yesterday between First Deputy Premier Oleg Soskovets and U.S. Ambassador to Moscow Thomas Pickering. Mr. Soskovets noted the importance of the upcoming summit for all participating countries, especially stressing the role of Russia and the United States as holders of the largest nuclear arsenals, in ensuring global security.

Thomas Pickering for his part expressed the hope that Moscow and Washington, both in the framework of the forum and in the course of bilateral meetings, will manage to reach agreements that will be of major importance in ensuring nuclear security in the world. According to the U.S. ambassador, in the course of their negotiations Boris Yeltsin and Bill Clinton will discuss a broad range of economic problems. Mr. Pickering believes that Russian-U.S. cooperation is especially successful in the sphere of space, aviation, and trade.

Political matters will include the reduction of strategic weapons, the ABM Treaty, the reduction of chemical and biological weapons, and ratification of the START II Treaty. They might also discuss the Dayton Agreements on Bosnia, a European security system, and NATO eastward expansion.

According to NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA sources, apart from other things, in the course of bilateral Russian-U.S. negotiations in Moscow it is planned to reach an agreement on the U.S. purchase of 500 tonnes of enriched uranium from Russia.

Russia: 'Experts' Cited on Issues at Nuclear Summit

MM1704150796 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 Apr 96 p 3

[Article by Viktor Litovkin: "At the Upcoming Summit Russia Will Deny Charges of Uranium Smuggling"]

[FBIS Translated Text] At the "G-7 + 1" summit in Moscow on nuclear security problems Boris Yeltsin will proclaim in very tough terms the national interests of the Russian nuclear industry. As Atomic Energy Minister Viktor Mikhaylov said, there are all too many people who want to squeeze us out of the world nuclear market on any pretexts.

A few days ago Boris Yeltsin reached agreement during a phone call with Bill Clinton that the military aspect of nuclear security will not be discussed in Moscow. That problem largely concerns our two countries, and it is being consistently resolved.

The situation regarding the problems of the security of the "peaceful atom" is more complex. There are serious disagreements among the leading world states here. For instance, Italy is categorically opposed to the construction of nuclear power stations. It used to have just one nuclear power station at Garigliano, which the Italians resolutely closed. The power they purchase from France is quite enough for them. But in France almost 80 percent of power is generated at nuclear power stations!

The United States has its own position. Although there are over 100 nuclear reactors in the country, even without them the United States has plenty of power thanks to cheap coal. The nuclear power industry accounts for only around 20 percent. There is no point in President Clinton putting forward any nuclear initiatives in the sphere of the development of the nuclear power industry on the threshold of the presidential elections. for fear of losing the "green" vote.

The situation is approximately the same in Japan. The recent accident at the Manju reactor is making it wary of the construction and reconstruction of old stations.

An anti-nuclear power approach does not suit Russia. Not only does it have to reconstruct around 10 of its own nuclear power stations constructed in the mid-seventies (they are far below present safety standards), but also, most importantly, it would like to take part in the international market for services in modernizing and reconstructing such nuclear power stations.

There are 120 of these obsolete reactor units in the world (most of all in the United States). An extremely fierce competitive battle is under way for contracts to reconstruct these stations, partly via the slashing of the costs of services, but the cost- cutting of work entails a decline in safety standards. Russia is proposing that agreement be reached on dividing up the nuclear market and establishing common prices for identical work.

There are also bilateral problems about the "peaceful atom" in relations between Russia and the United States. Implementation of the $11.5-billion contract signed by the U.S. Government for the purchase of 500 tonnes of low-grade 4.4-percent uranium from Russia has been practically stalled for two years. U.S. objections to Russia's participation in constructing the nuclear power station in Bushehr (Iran) have not been lifted (although the United States itself is going to reconstruct a nuclear power station in North Korea).

Specialists believe that the summit participants should enshrine at the declaration level most-favored-nation status in the world nuclear services market for all summit participants. Experts will do the rest.

An equally acute problem is the treatment of spent nuclear fuel. France, Britain, Japan, and Russia, for instance, adhere to the concept of a "closed fuel cycle" whereby solid waste produced at nuclear power stations is reprocessed and reused. The United States and Canada endeavor to bury waste immediately. Russia is proposing that efforts be pooled in the quest for the most rational and safest option. We already have some studies [narabotki]. But, once again, they require financial support and coordinated action.

The same goes for the problem of the protection of nuclear materials. The speculation in the world press, especially in the FRG, about the "uranium and plutonium black market" that allegedly exists in Russia does nothing but irritate our specialists. And President Yeltsin, they say, will be prepared to deal a fitting rebuff to leaders who decide once again to accuse Russia of underground nuclear exports. At the same time, specialists believe, this question does indeed exist. But although among the "G-8" we have the most difficult economic position, it is by no means a Russian "sore point." This problem can be solved by pooling the technical, financial, and special efforts of all countries.

We are sure, leading Moscow experts told me, that President Yeltsin will also draw colleagues' attention to the problem of the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons. There is the greatest scope for activity by the "G-8" leaders here. Without efforts on their part neither Pakistan, nor India, nor Israel will sign the nuclear nonproliferation treaty.

Russia: Yeltsin, Clinton Itinerary at Upcoming Summit Viewed

LD1704164496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1502 GMT 17 Apr 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Boris Yeltsin is due to have bilateral meetings with participants of a nuclear security summit of the Group of Seven industrialized countries and Russia, to be held on April 19 and 20, an officer at the summit main press center told Interfax.

Under a preliminary agenda, on April 19 Yeltsin is due to meet the prime ministers of Canada, Japan and Britain, the French president, the German chancellor and the European Commission president.

On the evening of that day the summit participants are to have a working dinner at the Grand Kremlin Palace, to be followed by a concert in the Kremlin's St. George Hall to mark the opening of the summit.

The summit itself is preliminarily scheduled to be held in the Kremlin between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. (between 0600 and 1100 GMT) on April 20.

After it Yeltsin and French President Jacques Chirac, summit co-chairmen, are to hold a news conference to sum up the meeting. According to preliminary reports, each of the two presidents plans to give his own news conference on Saturday evening.

The same day Yeltsin is due to have meetings with the Ukrainian president and Italian prime minister.

Yeltsin and U.S. President Bill Clinton are due to meet in Novo-Ogaryovo near Moscow on April 21.

IF Note: The U.S. ambassador to Russia, Thomas Pickering, told reporters in Moscow Yeltsin and Clinton planned to discuss flank limitations under the Conventional Forces in Europe treaty, a range of problems stemming from the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty and problems of destruction of biological and chemical weapons. The two leaders might also bring up NATO's planned eastward expansion, cooperation in enforcing peace accords on Bosnia, European security as a whole, some aspects of armaments control and preparations for a treaty to ban all nuclear tests, Pickering said.

The press center forecast that between 2,000 and 2,500 reporters from various countries would cover the summit. Accreditation cards have already been issued to 1,400 journalists.

A spokesman for Russia's Atomic Energy Ministry told Interfax that international expert teams had already drafted a final communique for the summit and several other documents reflecting the views of the G7 and Russia on illegal traffic in nuclear materials and on what is to be done with fissionable materials released in the course of destruction of nuclear weapons.

The spokesman said the subjects to be discussed at the summit included the possibility of developing safer nuclear reactors.

It is expected that the leaders of the eight states will be provided with information on Russian nuclear power plants. They are also due to receive copies of a report on the use of nuclear power to generate electricity by the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Hans Blix. The document reflects the IAEA's views on nuclear security and the problem of nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

The summit program also includes a Russian-U.S. exhibition on nuclear security and control of nuclear materials.

Leading American nuclear specialist Mark Gibbs said on Tuesday the summit participants were likely to reach a compromise and state support for proposals to develop fuel using weapon-grade plutonium.

Gibbs told a seminar in Moscow Russia and the United States disagreed on what is to be done with weapon-grade plutonium. American specialists insist it should be buried as radioactive waste, but the Russians believe it should be used as a component in making nuclear fuel.

To date 100 tonnes of weapon-grade plutonium has been accumulated in the United States and 150 tonnes in Russia.

Russia: Yeltsin, Clinton Not To Discuss Urals Underground Complex

LD1704184496 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1600 GMT 17 Apr 96

[From the "Vesti" news program]

[FBIS Translated Text] A recently published report was heard throughout the world today. It said that the United States might ask Russia for information about the construction of a giant military complex in the south Urals. A spy satellite has established that the complex covers an area comparable to that of the U.S. capital. It is implied that Russia is carrying out disarmament with U.S. financial support, and that the U.S. Congress is concerned about the fate of these funds.

The intelligence report will hardly give rise to any conflict. It is well known that Russia is disarming more than anyone else, outdoing the United States itself. The U.S. State Department has already let it be understood that this topic will not be raised during the meeting in Moscow between Presidents Yeltsin and Clinton.

Russia: 'Questions' Over Nuclear Summit Aired

MM1804084296 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 18 Apr 96 p 5

["Our Commentary" by Sergey Maslov: "Too Many Nuclear Cooks May Spoil the Broth for Russia and Its Warheads. The Summit Opening in Moscow Tomorrow Will Clarify How the 'G-8' Formula Should Be Interpreted"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Logically, any meeting at the highest level ought to meet the highest level of expectations. How true is that of the nuclear safety summit which opens tomorrow in Moscow?

Various answers are possible. The simplest is this: The meeting is doomed to succeed. Judge for yourselves: Can it end in failure when the leaders of the two main nuclear powers have set out on an election race in the hope of extending their presidential powers for another term? Since there is a mutual interest in a successful outcome of the event, that is how it will be.

But that answer is too simple. Too easy. It may entirely suit those mass media that have recently been abundantly displaying a nostalgic yearning for semiofficial status. Thus you learn (citing the Kremlin and the Elysee Palace) that everything is "going well" in the course of preparations for the summit. Has anyone ever heard a politician in power say that things are going badly for them?

In order to produce ready-made answers, you need at least to ask yourself questions. More than enough of them have accumulated ahead of the Moscow summit. The very fact that the leaders of the "G-7" are going to meet in Moscow to discuss a whole complex of global problems is pleasing. The "G-7" in company with Russia will for the first time — at least for a couple of days — appear to be a full-blown "G-8." But it is no secret to anyone that Western politicians and mass media have long been seeking to reduce the problem of nuclear safety to the problem of Russia.

The possibility of the theft of nuclear munitions or fissionable material in Russia poses the "number one threat" to U.S. national security, a report by the Center for Problems of Science and International Relations circulated in Washington in March asserts. The correctness of the many such reproaches (very common not only in the United States) can be debated in each specific instance. At any rate, the fears are understandable. It is something else that is not entirely understandable: How should the present "G-8" formula be interpreted — seven plus one, or seven against one?

However, there are also fears of a different sort — in our country. Some people are inclined to see the systematic peddling of the theme of "nuclear anarchy" in Russia as revealing an elementary desire by the West to get control of the Russian nuclear complex. In principle it is difficult to shake off the thought that this prospect is, if not the goal, then at any rate a temptation for our negotiating partners. Will the latest (we have already lost count of them) assurances from representatives of the Russian Ministry of Atomic Energy that in 99 cases out of 100 reports of the smuggling of fissionable material out of Russia are not borne out by the facts succeed in keeping the "G-7" from that temptation?

The next question has a specific addressee in the shape of official Bonn, which is so concerned for the successful development of German-Russian relations yet nevertheless is in no hurry to clarify a scandalous episode that is casting a shadow of mutual suspicion over those relations. This business has been dubbed the "plutonium affair" by the German press. As is well known, the German intelligence service BND has been implicated in it — its agents provoked the smuggling from Moscow of plutonium of allegedly Russian origin. I say allegedly partly because the German authorities, only too worryingly, for some reason are not responding to the Russian side's requests to be given samples of the radioactive material confiscated at Munich airport. Analysis of them would help either to deny or to confirm the theory of the Russian origin of the plutonium. In the latter case it would be possible to determine the source of the leak and totally block it and ultimately to punish the culprits. You would think Germany ought to be as interested in this as Russia. But there are still no samples. And the more time passes, the greater the certainty becomes that we are dealing merely with an unprecedented action by German intelligence to discredit another state with which normal relations are maintained. You simply cannot find any peacetime analogies during the 20th century. Has the time not come for Russia to demand the creation of a clear international legal mechanism for collaboration between the interested parties in such situations?

Military aspects of the nuclear security problem will not be touched on at the summit, unless you count discussion of the question of totally ending nuclear tests, Moscow has stressed ahead of the summit. This too prompts a perplexed question: Maybe all disarmament problems have now been solved? The Kremlin is saying nothing. But right on the eve of the summit a metallic note can be heard in the voice of U.S. Defense Secretary W. Perry. Or, to be more accurate, the sound of rattling metal.

Perry is proclaiming the need to create a nationwide system of antiballistic missile defenses in the United States. Such a step would clearly contravene the 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of ABM Systems and would trigger a chain reaction which could wreck ratification of the START II treaty. After all, as is well known, in elaborating the agreements Russia directly linked the process of its own disarmament with the immutability of articles of the ABM treaty.

However, it would be unfair to say that the Kremlin is displaying absolutely no activeness in its formerly traditional disarmament field. A week before the summit Boris Yeltsin put forward an initiative that certainly deserves attention. The president called on the Western powers to abandon the siting of nuclear weapons outside national territories. For NATO, and primarily the United States, this would mean a cardinal review of the whole nuclear concept. Need I explain why Western diplomats reacted coolly to Yeltsin's proposal? And can we expect it to be treated any differently during the summit?

At the height of his election campaign the president will appear before Russians among impressive company. The leaders not only of the "G-7" and Russia, but also of Ukraine will assemble in Moscow. The summit agenda seemingly in no way tallies with Yeltsin's self-publicizing aspirations of recent weeks. At any rate, you cannot interpret the meeting as purely a preelection propaganda move. One way or another, the "G-7" leaders naturally intend to adjust their policy in the nuclear safety sphere according to the development of the political situation in Russia. Therefore the theme of the upcoming elections and their possible outcome simply cannot be avoided at the summit. To what extent will it affect the course of the debates?

Questions, questions, questions....

Russia: Decree on Adoption of Nuclear Safety Convention Published

MM1704112496 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Apr 96 p 3

[Russian Federation Government Decree No. 377 "On the Adoption of the Convention on Nuclear Safety," dated Moscow 3 April 1996 and signed by Russian Federation Government Chairman V. Chernomyrdin]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian Federation Government decrees:

1. The Convention on Nuclear Safety signed in Vienna on 21 September 1994 is to be adopted.

2. The Russian Federation Ministry of Foreign Affairs is to be tasked with informing the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency of the adoption by the Russian Federation of the Convention specified in Paragraph 1 of this decree.

3. With a view to implementing the provisions of the Convention specified in Paragraph 1 of this decree the Russian Federal Inspectorate for Nuclear and Radiation Safety is to be designated the regulatory agency and the Russian Federation Ministry of Atomic Energy is to be designated the agency for the utilization of nuclear energy.

Russia: Gorbachev on Chernobyl, Upcoming G-7 Summit

BR1704135896 Rome LA REPUBBLICA in Italian 17 Apr 96 p 9

[Interview with former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev by Enrico Franceschini in Moscow; date not given: "Help Us To Avert Another Chernobyl"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow — Chernobyl, 10 years after. These 10 years have passed quickly, because the consequences of the most serious civil nuclear incident in history are still with us: They will be discussed at the G-7 summit in Moscow this weekend. But whenever Chernobyl is discussed, reference is always made to the man who, by virtue of his power and the decisions he made, was the main protagonist in that drama — Mikhail Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU at the time of the explosion at no. 4 reactor, former president of the USSR, and now a candidate to the Russian presidency. LA REPUBBLICA interviewed him on the eve of the 10th anniversary of the accident.

[Franceschini] Mikhail Sergeyevich: First, how did you hear about what happened at Chernobyl, and how did you react?

[Gorbachev] The incident occurred on the night of 25-26 April 1986; the first information reached Moscow on the morning of 26 April and was passed to prime Minister Ryzhkov, who told me about it. I convened an urgent meeting of the CPSU Politburo, at which we approved the decision to send immediately to the area of the damaged reactor a government committee led by nuclear energy experts, medics, and radiologists and presided over by Deputy Prime Minister Sherbyna.

[Franceschini] Your decision not to conceal the truth about Chernobyl from the Russians marked a turning point in glasnost. Did you encounter any resistance to informing the Soviet people about the gravity of the incident?

[Gorbachev] There were two viewpoints expressed at the Politburo session. One was that the information should be released gradually, so as not to cause panic and to worsen matters. And I must say that it was not a new opinion, because in other countries too, on the occasion of serious nuclear accidents, information was released with a deliberate delay. Nevertheless, there prevailed among us an opposite viewpoint — to fully report all the information available to us, without restrictions or reservations. My personal position was clear cut: not to conceal the truth in any way. I was supported by Ryzhkov, Ligachev, Yakovlev, Medvedev, and Shevardnadze, and the decision was adopted.

[Franceschini] Would it have been possible to do more, and better, to organize the first aid for the victims and to deal with the consequences of the accident?

[Gorbachev] With after sight, it is of course possible to find defects and shortcomings in what we did. But it must be realized that both we, the political leaders, and the scientists failed to realize the scale of the disaster right away. There had never been such an incident anywhere in the world. And for this very reason there was no model to follow, no formula from which to proceed in dealing with a breakdown of that kind and on such a scale. With my heart in my hand, I can state that we did everything that it was possible to do then, under those conditions.

[Franceschini] When did you realize the gravity of what had happened?

[Gorbachev] At the beginning of May, when it became apparent that we would have to transfer tens of thousands of people away from the radioactive area, to carry our medical examinations of almost half-a-million people, carry out works on a vast scale, and construct a sarcophagus over the destroyed reactor.

[Franceschini] Were there heroes in the Chernobyl tragedy?

[Gorbachev] Workers, scientists, experts, soldiers — all those who took part in the assistance and in covering up the reactor were heroic. But more than anyone else, I want to stress the heroism, sacrifice, and self-denial of the team of firefighters who first reached the site of the incident. That team spared us even worse consequences. Those boys entered the nuclear inferno: They are all dead, and through their sacrifice they saved many lives. During those dramatic days many people displayed the finest human and moral qualities. There were volunteers who asked to be sent to Chernobyl to contribute to the assistance work.

[Franceschini] In 1986 cooperation between the USSR and the West was just starting. Were you satisfied with the international support and solidarity during the incident?

[Gorbachev] Many all over the world responded to our tragedy. I can cite, first, an American medic, Robert Gale, and also a great many public organizations, private organizations, and single individuals who sent us assistance, equipment, and medical supplies. It was an unprecedented campaign of solidarity. At the same time, however, some foreign propaganda centers launched a campaign of misinformation and accusations, which showed that they were not so concerned about the tragedy, but were, rather, trying to exploit it in order to discredit Moscow's new policy. May God judge them.

[Franceschini] Between 1986 and 1991, when you were still in power, did you consider the possibility of closing down Chernobyl for safety reasons?

[Gorbachev] Yes, there were such proposals, and we did examine them. But it was a very complex matter, from both the technical and the economic viewpoints. And subsequent developments in the USSR set back the search for a solution.

[Franceschini] What do you think the solution would be now?

[Gorbachev] It is difficult for me to judge, because I am no longer as well informed as I was then, and because Chernobyl is now part of another state, Ukraine, which must resolve the problem without outside pressures. I have heard that the sarcophagus is damaged now, that there are cracks in it, because it was constructed as quickly as possible under very tough conditions. Be that as it may, I think that Chernobyl cannot be closed down without help from the world community.

[Franceschini] What do you think of the safety of nuclear power plants in Russia and the other countries of the former Soviet Union

[Gorbachev] The Chernobyl accident highlighted many problems concerning nuclear safety throughout the former USSR, and in the rest of the world. It helped to make us understand the danger of negligence, lack of attention, and criminal attitudes toward nature and the human habitat. The euphoria about the unlimited potential of nuclear power has given way to a more responsible approach. But I do not think that the nuclear power plants of Russia or the former USSR are any worse than those of the rest of the world from the safety viewpoint, as some foreign experts argue or would have us believe. In the final analysis, both before the Chernobyl disaster and since it there have been many breakdowns at nuclear power plans, and I am not at all sure that we know the real scale of those incidents. The time has come to start proper international cooperation. As for Russia, nuclear energy, like all other sectors of industry and the economy, is experiencing a very difficult period. We lack the means to modernize plant, our scientists are emigrating, and for this reason our nuclear safety is prompting legitimate concerns. The solution depends on the general decisions of Russian policy. But at least for the present we cannot do without nuclear power, just as other countries cannot.

[Franceschini] If you were to be elected Russian president, what would you propose for Chernobyl?

[Gorbachev] Even though Chernobyl is in Ukraine, I think that we cannot stand by and passively watch the quest for a solution. Russia, Ukraine, Belarus — the three nations worst hit by the incident — must combine their efforts to resolve the consequences of the disaster. And not only them, because Chernobyl is a global problem. The Chernobyl bell tolls for everyone, and makes us understand the nature of the era in which we live.

Russia: CIS States Seen Eroding Russian Arms Sales

MM1704145496 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Apr 96 p 3

[Article by Aleksandr Sychev: "Arms Dealers From CIS Cut the Ground From Under Russia's Feet"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The furor erupted from a most unexpected quarter. The Peruvian Air Force purchased from Ukraine Mi helicopter propeller blades bought many years ago from the former Soviet Union. A routine deal, which did not portend any complications — propellers need to be changed periodically. The new blades were installed on the helicopters; the engines were started up, but instead of taking off, the faster the propellers turned, the more tightly the helicopters hugged the ground.

Without going into technical details, the blades proved to be of the wrong design. But this did not ease the position of Peruvian Defense Minister Victor Malca, who had to resign for having lobbied on behalf of the deals involving old Ukrainian and Belarusian aviation technology. Many other functionaries are also fearful: The investigation is continuing.

Incidents of this type involving states that once belonged to the USSR have today become routine. The profound economic crisis is prompting them to search for hard currency sources. But unlike Russia, they are incapable of ensuring complete delivery of new weapons or of weapons formerly in use — the majority of design bureaus and industrial enterprises remain on Russian territory.

The search for hard currency has driven Kiev to extreme measures. President Leonid Kuchma supervises the arms trade personally; during his visit to Vietnam, which has just ended, he devoted the bulk of the talks to the acquisition by Hanoi of Russian-made weapons from Ukraine.

Moreover, the Ukrainian Government plans by the year 2000 to increase the volume of its arms exports to $10 billion (and this is only a little less than the United States' current share of world trade) and to adopt simplified licensing procedures. The result: numerous scandals involving Ukrainian arms dealers.

Today Ukraine has offered to repair Algeria's Russian-made Mi helicopters. Our southern neighbors have the potential — they have a maintenance depot and the relevant experience. But all the same, they cannot do it without Russia, since the engines for the helicopters are manufactured only in Rostov. And Russia does not intend to share its markets. Consequently, Algeria can expect the surprises that Pakistan encountered.

The Pakistan experience was as follows. In 1994 the Ukrainian firm "Progress" delivered to Pakistan shells worth $14 million, which on firing fell to earth, hardly having left the gun barrels. Islamabad canceled the deal, but has not recovered the money.

Representatives of Ukraine's defense industry have also been sighted in conflict zones. In March 1995 a Ukrainian transport plane was detained on the Azores Islands. It was carrying arms to the zone of the border conflict between Peru and Ecuador. In the accompanying documents the cargo was described as medicines.

Undoubtedly, arms are especially needed where they are actively used. Many companies make difficulties when emissaries from hot spots approach them, but Ukrainian firms are distinguished by the fact that they make no difference between conflicting sides, offering their services to all who desire them.

For example, bypassing the treaty on the nonproliferation of missile technology, they offered Pakistan "Tochka" tactical missiles, which Islamabad plans to use as a counterweight to India's "Prithvi" missiles. At the same time Kiev is stubbornly seeking reciprocity in relations with India also, provoking Delhi's dissatisfaction with its unfastidiousness in relations.

Kiev is encouraged to disregard political nuances not only by its moribund military-industrial complex but also by the indulgence of the United States, which is setting up Ukraine and other CIS and former Warsaw Pact countries as rivals to Russia. Washington is trying to prevent Russia from increasing its share of the world arms market.

The attack is being delivered on a wide front. In particular, the United States is squeezing Russia out of its traditional markets in Central and East Europe. Washington and other NATO countries send military equipment there virtually for free. At the beginning of year the U.S. Defense Department offered Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary second-hand F16 aircraft on lease terms. There is no money available in this region at the moment, but it is necessary to bind these countries to U.S. arms companies.

In other regions where Americans cannot operate themselves for political reasons, Washington tries to use third parties. By turning a blind eye to the commercial activity of CIS countries, China, and a number of former Warsaw Pact members, Washington hopes that they will become alternative sources of Russian weapons.

While Washington cannot countenance any contacts between Russia and Iran, the activity of other states in that country meets with no objections. Not to mention Libya, against which international sanctions are in force, fully observed by Russia. And after all, this country was one of the biggest purchasers of weapons from the USSR, and paid its bills on time. And Russian arms dealers are impatiently waiting to be able to resume trade.

Meanwhile, the "Working Protocol on Cooperation Between Ukrainian Defense Enterprises and the Libyan Navy Main Staff" signed between Ukraine and Libya in January 1996 passed unnoticed. This document provides for the repair, maintenance, and modernization of Libyan warships. At the same time, the Ukrainian company "Sarmat" has begun servicing the Su-24's that flew from Iraq to Iran during the campaign in the Persian Gulf. They were detained there, and have not been returned to Iraq to this day.

Their proteges cannot offer serious competition to U.S. companies. But by delivering poor quality military equipment they can undermine confidence in Russian weapons.

Russia, according to our organizations engaging in military-technical cooperation, is not responsible for the technical condition of our weapons that have been sold to other countries. So countries that buy Russian weapons on the cheap from countries other than Russia and hope thereby to save money may be in for a disappointment. Just like Peru, Pakistan, and other states.

Russia: World Events Said To Affect Presidential Race

964F1731B Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 29 Mar 96 p 9

[Article by Vladimir Razuvayev, doctor of political sciences: "Has Yeltsin Learned Reagan's Lessons? International Factor in the Presidential Campaign"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is obvious that the international factor will perform a central role in the present election campaign in Russia. This is one way in which it is cardinally different from the parliamentary elections where, of the major parties, only the CPRF paid priority attention to foreign policy problems.

The international context constituting the background for the election campaigns of the presidential candidates is as yet confined to four aspects. First, Russia is now a regional rather than a great power, and its paramount political interests are almost entirely encompassed within the framework of the post-Soviet territory, which coincides fully with the basic preferences that are displayed by the Russian electorate. Second, the Russian Federation remains financially and economically dependent on the West. Third, the erstwhile predominant pro-West affections of the Russian population have been replaced by a steadfast mistrust of the United States and its West European allies. Fourth and finally, the actual and potential influence of the Asiatic factor on the behavior of the Russian electorate should be deemed to be minimal, even in the regions bordering China.

The external factor manifested itself most powerfully in this election campaign after some portion of the IMF credit was with its full consent used to cover part of the treasury's wage arrears. Western financial circles could not have given Boris Yeltsin a better present. It has to be acknowledged that the president made judicious use of the handicap he possesses over the other candidates as head of state and skillfully linked the planned wage decision with his name. For the international creditors the affections of the Russian electorate are neither here nor there, but they are patently of use to Boris Yeltsin today. The other presidential candidates, to their misfortune, are cut off from the political game of use of the Western credit.

On an other matter of urgency for Russian citizens—what will happen with the so-called "post-Soviet territory"—the advantage originally was on the side of the opposition, not a president weighed down by the "Belovezhskaya sin." According to all public opinion polls, an absolute majority of the population of Russia regrets the division of the Union. Society places the bulk of the blame for the division on the elite of that time, including, primarily, Boris Yeltsin. At the same time the idea of political reintegration with the majority of republics of the former USSR, which is fraught with financial costs, does currently not enjoy the support of a majority of the electorate. The sole exception is Belarus, with which the bulk of Russian society agrees to reunification even if there are personal financial losses.

In this situation the Communists' initiative on cancellation of the State Duma [as published] decree of 12 December 1991 was a strong act, even if not the best from the viewpoint of the interests of Gennadiy Zyuganov. It is hard to understand why the president's analysts deemed this step "unconcealed exposure" and a "big mistake." It is perfectly obvious that calling a decision corresponding to the opinion of an absolute majority of Russian citizens a mistake is inaccurate, to say the least. On the contrary, the CPRF would have made a serious mistake had its deputies not voted for this decree. The Communists promised their constituents before the parliamentary elections that they would cancel the Belovezhskaya Agreements. From political considerations they did not denounce the agreements themselves but confined themselves to a demonstrative gesture. But now the presidential candidate from the CPRF can at least maintain—even if not with a complete right to do so—that his faction is keeping its campaign promises.

It is possible in speaking of the mistake of the Communists the president's analysts were referring to the numerous statements of protest and condemnation on the part of the leaders of the post-Soviet states evoked by the Duma's decision. It is hardly likely, though, that these actions will really incline Russian voters against the CPRF candidate. There are at least three reasons why. The first is the conviction of the bulk of the Russian population that it is primarily the ruling circles of the CIS states interested not in the prosperity of their peoples but in the defense of personal interests that are to blame for the continued division of the USSR. Accordingly, the statements of the post-Soviet leaders concerning the impermissibility of the denunciation of the Belovezhskaya Agreements only bolster this opinion. Second, assertiveness in condemnation of the State Duma decree has been manifested by post-Soviet state leaders and politicians who do not enjoy the trust and affection of Russian citizens, Leonid Kravchuk included. Third, the experience of all countries shows that the voter is least of all inclined to take account of the interests of other states and the possibility of a sharp reaction on the part of their leaders. Consideration of this was demonstrated recently, incidentally, by the Republicans in the United States, having advocated the country's withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, not being in fear of a corresponding reaction on the part of Russia.

The tough reaction of the head of state and his associates to the State Duma decree of 15 March should evidently be seen predominantly as an emotional response to the key and painful issues for Yeltsin raised by CPRF: complicity in the Belovezhskaya Agreements, the aspiration of the Communists to take advantage of this fact in their election campaign, and the relatively greater attractiveness of the radical communist solution in the face of the agreements being prepared by the government on an extension of the integration of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and, possibly, Kyrgyzstan in the socioeconomic and humanitarian spheres. The total impression given is that the team of the head of state was unprepared for the Duma's decision, logical in the present situation.

Everywhere—from Alaska to Bratislava—the unwritten law of the achievement of success in use of the international factor in a campaign struggle is simple and cynical: An impressive demonstration of the presidential candidate's capacity for championing national interests is essential first and foremost. A demonstration, precisely, inasmuch as specific achievements that cannot profitably be presented to the electorate generally do not count in this period, as, equally, sincerity of intentions, professionalism, and honesty do not either. Taking pride of place in this respect in terms of influence on the audience is television. And Boris Yeltsin has acquired a very serious handicap here in the election campaign in Russia. For example, as head of state, he has every opportunity to focus the country's attention on himself at the time of overseas trips and when receiving foreign leaders. He can in a few days change the whole country's opinion of him during a foreign policy crisis, as was the case with Margaret Thatcher during the Falklands War and with Jimmy Carter after the taking of the hostages in Iran.

An ability to take advantage of the opportunities of the present stage of "television democracy" in the interests of one's political and personal image is essential for the realization of this handicap, though. Ronald Reagan once knew how to demonstrate these qualities brilliantly, which enabled him to a large extent to remain Americans' favorite, despite several serious policy failures. Russian politicians are a long way away from such skill. Not only opposition politicians but Boris Yeltsin and his entourage also.

Finally, the financial and moral solidarity of overseas representatives is definitely influencing the course of the campaign struggle in Russia. The significance of the first should not be exaggerated—the fate of the elections will ultimately be decided by rubles, not dollars or karbovantsy. Moral solidarity exerts a stronger influence on the electorate. The role of Boris Yeltsin as the premier candidate of "democrats" is emphasized especially for the pro-West part of the electorate by particular gestures on the part of leading politicians of the West. One such was, for example, the visit of Helmut Kohl to Moscow this February. Even more significant is the factor of solidarity—in the broad meaning of this word—on the part of Russian communities in the post-Soviet countries. The positions of the CPRF and the LDPR are strongest there, for understandable reasons.

The overall result is obvious: The international factor in the election struggle in Russia is being used far from fully today and by no means professionally. The most assertiveness is being displayed by Boris Yeltsin and Gennadiy Zyuganov. The other candidates are passive as yet. The main cards have already been shown—by the decision of the IMF to grant Russia credit of $10.5 billion and the State Duma decree of 15 March. One further move will be made by the president when the agreement on an extension of integration is signed. This will be done before 16 June, by all accounts.

Russia: Foreign Policy Concept Critiqued

964F1731A Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 4

["Opinion" article by Andrey Vladimirovich Krutskikh, doctor of historical sciences: "Through the Prism of Geopolitics: Thoughts on Russia's Foreign Policy Concept"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Among the important and, I would like to hope, far-reaching changes in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia one notices not only the strong-state emphasis of the priorities of the country's foreign policy but also the actual terminological enrichment of the political language of Russian diplomacy. The superlatives that extolled the extent of the personal mutual understanding of the leaders, particularly in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs-Department of State tandem, have somehow rapidly disappeared. Derivatives of such a concept of geopolitics have come increasingly to be put into circulation in exchange, without any ideological anguish, what is more. It was noted from the very outset, for example, that the geopolitical situation is a factor that influences the policy of any state.

But we can hardly boast that Russia's concerns are today being adequately considered by its international community colleagues. Yet sufficient time has elapsed for an appropriate evaluation of our sincerity and selflessness on the paths of self-transformation. There has been no "evil empire" and the diplomacy of democratic Russia has been demonstrating practically everywhere a readiness to march in step with the former imperialist enemies of the USSR for several years now.

Why, we wonder, would the West not settle, once for all, to reassure Russia, the question of nonexpansion of the NATO military-political alliance and not make the arterial direction of the building of a united Europe cooperation within the framework of the CSCE? Why, for example, does NATO not agree in conjunction with Russia to guarantee the security and neutrality of Central and East Europe? Why are the obstacles discriminating against Russia in access to the American and British technology markets and so forth not removed? After all, the Russian Federation is oriented toward cooperation, is objectively incapable of threatening the United States and Europe—it cannot sort things out at home with Chechnya— and is contributing actively to the regulation of problems, up to and including total withdrawal from former zones of the Soviet presence and influence, which hitherto were very important. Nor could we seriously be censured for subversive activity.

At this time, evidently, when the foundations of the world order of the new historical stage are being laid, the values and ideals common to all mankind are still not yet decisive in the West's approach to the formation of the system of international relations. As, equally, global threats—terrorism, crime, the drugs trade, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, environmental pollution—have not assumed proportions whereupon the task of combating them truly eclipses political dissension in the way that the need for the joint repulse of Hitlerism combined antipodes in international relations. In other words, mankind has not yet had it hard enough for it to have been made aware of the utter vanity of intrigues in the world arena.

Under these conditions of a world that is far from ideal and has yet to mature to the point of universal fraternity, in which interstate antagonism has barely become less intensive, it would be useful in the name of one's own well-being not to lull oneself with the naivete that on the international stage you do not hit a man when he's down, that the Russian state may be respected outside of it merely for the fact that it exists (regardless of its condition and power), and that Russia may entrust its future to the good graces of new friends or whoever else in addition, in the form even of very representative and authoritative international institutions and wealthy foundations. Now, when Russia is once again forced to become aware of itself under new circumstances and to choose its path, it would not be inappropriate for it to take a look in the geopolitical mirror.

Let us try without self-delusion and demagogy to answer the question: Who in the world needs a strong Russia? Not one soliciting loans and credit but one granting them. Not one importing food to feed itself but one exporting it. Not a raw material appendage of countries but the industrial and technological workshop of the world. Not with a disintegrating army but with armed forces leaving not the slightest chance of anyone doubting the country's defense capability. With protected borders and the people's growing prosperity. Perhaps only Russia itself could be unequivocally inspired by such a prospect.

At the present time the world is being transformed increasingly into a multipolar world. But this by no means signifies a desire for Russian competition within an economic framework or the independence and efficacy of Russia's position in the solution of international political and military questions. The aspiration to isolate Russia is, as before, by no means a hypothetical threat. It could assume its geopolitical embodiment, for example, within the framework of the plans for the expansion of NATO.

It is not hard to imagine who in the event of their realization would gain and lose what. For West Europe this would signify that the line of political demarcation into ours and others' would shift from the Oder and Neisse far to the east. With all the ensuing military-strategic advantages. For East Europe the possibility of registering, albeit as poor relations even, in the noble common European home would be attractive in this version. The European countries of the CIS could count on the position of buffer between the new West and Russia. Some of them could be tempted to speculate on an anti-Russian mood and give free rein to nationalism here.

In this outline Russia would be corked up in the zone of the former USSR, would be condemned to diplomatic, border, and miscellaneous showdowns with its neighbors, and would turn to the East. There it would have to take part in a regional balance of forces with China and Japan, which, one availing itself of geographical advantages, the other, of economic advantages, would have an opportunity to curb a further Russian outlet to the dynamically developing Pacific rim. Added to this is the pan-Islamic threat of Muslim extremism from the south.

The greatest benefit from this geopolitical arrangement would be promised the United States, which would preserve the maximum freedom in the use of its superpower status.

It could hardly be a comfort to us that the limit of profitability to the West of a weakening of Russia is geopolitically perfectly clear. It has been reached, I believe. Further endeavors in this field are simply no longer safe and without a direct war are unattainable and fraught with the risk of global destabilization. In addition, the modern East cannot be contained and a solution of global problems cannot be assisted with the forces of Muscovy or Kievan Rus.

Strictly controlled, with a very limited "ego" in the international arena—this, evidently, is what awaits Russia if it floats passively with the current of world politics and relies on an era of common sense and all-uniting objective trends of world development already having set in and doing everything for us.

The historical and geopolitical heritage of contemporary Russia is potentially sufficient for it to be able even in the present unpropitious situation to remain at the level of a superpower, prevent anyone manipulating it, preserve its originality, ensure consideration of its regional and global national interests, and guarantee its security.

Political will showing daring in this direction should be based on a number of principles and should take account of the mistakes of the past. It is necessary first and foremost to firmly grasp that the great postulate of Aleksandr Nevskiy—"Whoever comes to us with sword will perish by the sword"—has a reverse value for Russia itself also. We will not acquire friends either in the near or the far abroad by military expansion or the creation of the prerequisites for it, we will only intimidate those who trust us or who are waiting to be given an excuse or argument against Russia.

At the same time, it would be an unforgivable geopolitical extravagance to doubt the expediency of the restoration of voluntary integration with the countries of the former USSR which have matured to this point and which are taking practical steps in this direction. The way to a united, undivided Europe, to a world in which we are reckoned with not formally, but actually, lies via integration within the CIS. This process should become, granted all its objectiveness and inevitability, Russia's most urgent, principal foreign policy priority.

Integration is just as necessary for Russia's CIS partners if they are really thinking about the stable future of their countries and not relying on current conditions and if unity is to be achieved without diktat, on an equal basis. It is essentially a question of the restoration in new flexible forms of the integrity of the economic and geopolitical organism that took shape over centuries, with the pragmatic purpose of having better lives and being stronger together. And for this natural geopolitical movement Russia does not have to justify itself before anyone, seek permission from critics across the way, or capitulate before the isolationists within the country. Concealing this trend is harmful. On the contrary, it should be declared openly and with every assurance and put on a practical footing.

Realization of the process of reintegration could be acceptable to the international community—although, it has to be said plainly, it will from geopolitical considerations arouse no one's enthusiasm—if it is guaranteed that it will not serve as the precursor of a further push in any directions on the basis of any pretext or ideology whatever: to make happy, Slavicize, or Orthodoxize anyone or subject him to economic protectionism.

In turn, the persuasiveness of the guarantees will depend on the extent to which Russia can overcome its current internal ailments—instability, unpredictability, and the temptation of great-power ambitiousness as a synonym for a policy of expansionism, with which jingo patriots are tormenting its soul. It is clear that this task cannot be accomplished from positions of the weakness and indecisiveness of state power.

Foreign policy has been splendidly defined as the art of the possible. This is thrice pertinent for Russia. The adoption of a doctrine of prudent strategic sufficiency in the projection of foreign policy goals, the organizational development of the armed forces, and the pursuit of disarmament measures would make it possible to streamline Russia's international positions appreciably and make them explicable to itself and to the world community, not to mention the purely internal effect, in terms of economies in state budget resources, for example.

It would be highly useful to supplement this doctrine, particularly in its military and disarmament respect, by an adjusted integral concept of assurance of transparency which proceeds from the need for a combination of observance of adopted international commitments and the economic and technical possibilities of their fulfillment and the interests of national security and no detriment to defense capability and which also permits, at times, unilateral steps to be taken by way of good will, if they are more expedient from the practical viewpoint. Now, in the opinion of many experts, the process of the reduction and limitation of arms is fraught with the danger of it becoming, without due preparation, too economically burdensome and environmentally risky.

Not to be a chauvinist, the transition from bipolarity to multipolarity may be deemed essentially a blessing for Russia. It affords it great opportunities for, finally, pursuing its own concerns without overtaxing its strength. We no longer have any need to assume elevated commitments overseas, to assume responsibility for someone, vie with someone for world superiority, or prove the advantages of our ideology. Having secured the place of great power in a world multipolar microbalance of forces, Russia could avail itself of the fact that the former is not static, as before.

Regional balances of forces and the national interests and ambitions of other participants in the international community afford scope even within the framework of the geopolitical outlines that have taken shape as of today for political and diplomatic activity and constructive work. For example, European integration is by no means identical to Atlantic integration. The Near East, the Balkans, South Asia, the Far East, the Pacific rim, and other regions are not, although seeming to be otherwise at times, controlled from a single center, are multi-aspectual, and are politically highly mobile. It is important in Russia's regional policy that matters not be reduced to its partners being made hostages.

Russian foreign policy simply cannot allow itself to work exclusively for political effect and not really and effectively be a conduit of the economic interests of our country and national business. The economic content of bilateral political contacts and negotiations with other countries should be increased considerably.

The entire complex of bilateral relations and of Russia's participation in international organizations and forums could be reevaluated from positions of expediency and real utility. It is possible that such an analysis would lead to the conclusion that the principle of total representation does not recover its costs. Considerably more prosperous countries than us adopt a more zealous approach to the showing of their flag abroad, to the point of the closure of embassies where their upkeep is justified neither economically or politically.

History knows of no permanently smooth development of states. Upheavals are also natural, as are upsurges. In periods of fractures it is useful to recall the words of the historian V.O. Klyuchevskiy: "A hallmark of a great people is their capacity for getting back onto their feet after a fall. However onerous the humiliation, the hour will come, and they will gather their confused moral forces and embody them in one great man or several great people, who will lead them onto the straight historical path which they had temporarily left."

Now is the time to create both within the country and in the field of foreign policy. Only thus is it possible to champion and multiply the greatness of Russia. This labor brooks no diplomatic pauses.

Russia: Tatar President Receives Clinton Letter on Afghan POW's

LD1704144796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1333 GMT 17 Apr 96

[By Nikolay Sorokin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KAZAN, April 17 (Itar-Tass) — The U.S. Administration exerts efforts to free the crew of the Russian IL-76 plane detained by the Afghan opposition, says a letter by U.S. President Bill Clinton, received by the office of the Tatar president on Wednesday.

The wives of seven Kazan pilots who have been held captive in Afghanistan for the ninth month, appealed for help to the American president some time ago. His message was a reply to the appeal.

The document says that the United States, Pakistan and Russia concert efforts to return crew members home. The American administration does not stop efforts to release Russian pilots and acts through staff members of its consulates in Islamabad and Peshawar.

The letter expresses hope that the problem will be settled by common efforts.

Russia: Japanese Premier Supports Yeltsin-Led Reforms

LD1704191896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1804 GMT 17 Apr 96

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 17 (Interfax) - Japan's Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto will express support of Russian reforms as personified by Boris Yeltsin when the two men meet in the morning of April 19, deputy head of mission for the Japanese Embassy to Moscow, Minister Kazuhiko Togo told Interfax Wednesday.

Togo said that the importance of Hashimoto's visit to Moscow, where he will attend the G-8 nuclear safety summit, follows from the fact that it will be the first visit of a Japanese prime minister to Moscow in 11 years.

In Togo's words, the Japanese-Russian summit will enable the two leaders to establish personal relations two months in advance of the presidential elections in Russia.

"If President Yeltsin is reelected, he will be able to contact Japan through Hashimoto rather than in an impersonal way," Togo emphasized.

The June elections are of global importance for peace, security and prosperity of peoples, he said, and it is very important that the nuclear summit and the Japanese-Russian summit are held in Moscow in the run up to the elections.

According to Togo, Japan believes that at the bilateral summit the Russian leaders will restate their commitment to the Tokyo Declaration signed by Yeltsin when he visited Japan in 1993.

Togo believes that Hashimoto will confirm the Japanese proposal on upgrading the contacts between the military establishments of the two countries to the political level.

Both leaders will encourage the positive trends in the economic and cultural relations between the two countries, he expects. These trends include an increasing volume of trade, especially of the Russian export to Japan, meetings of intergovernmental commissions and implementation of various projects with the use of credits from Japan's ExImBank, Togo explained.

Togo did not rule out the possibility that Hashimoto and Yeltsin will discuss issues facing the Pacific region such as China and the situation on the Korean peninsula.

The relations between the two countries could be much closer but there is no need to hurry the process up, especially against a background of the election race, Togo said. "In this delicate situation we accumulate specific positive steps while unduly big changes can destroy the fundamentals of our relations," he said.

Togo welcomed the statement made by Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov at a meeting with his Japanese counterpart Yukihiko Ikeda that there are no more Russian troops on the isle of Shikotan and there are 3,500 Russian servicemen on the three other South Kuril isles.

Togo expressed the hope that the withdrawal of troops from the "northern territories" will continue.

Japan and Russia are trying to work out an agreement on fishing around the isles, he said. "If the leaders of Japan and Russia encourage this process somehow when they meet in Moscow, this will be a positive development," he continued.

Togo called for an early solution of this problem. "We certainly cannot be satisfied over the way the search for mutually acceptable agreements on this issue is proceeding but we do not intend to make a fuss over this issue," he said.

Japan "essentially supports Russia's integration into global and regional economic organizations but with due regard for changes in and development of the Russian economic system," Togo said. This covers Russia's entry of the WTO, APEC and OECD and its full integration into the G-7 group, he explained.

The APEC will discuss the admission of Russia and other countries next fall when the moratorium on new membership expires, Togo said.

Togo said that Japan wants safety of civilian nuclear reactors, the storage and transportation of nuclear waste and safety of storing and transporting nuclear materials to dominate the Moscow G-8 nuclear safety summit.

Storage and transportation of nuclear waste are especially important for Japan, he explained. "If the nuclear summit takes positive steps towards full solution of this problem, the people of Japan will welcome this," he said.

Togo said that Tokyo attaches great importance to conclusion of a Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and hopes that this document will be signed next September.

Japan expects the Moscow summit to give an additional impetus to the process of negotiating the treaty, he said.

Russia: Japan Planning To Raise Nuclear Safety at Moscow Summit

LD1704194796 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1806 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TOKYO, April 17 (Interfax) — Japan believes that countries possessing nuclear plants bear primary responsibility for their exploitation while countries possessing nuclear materials bear the main responsibility for their storage and transportation.

a high-ranking Japanese Foreign Ministry official told an Interfax correspondent in Tokyo.

The Moscow summit on nuclear safety planned for April 19-20, which will bring together the Group of Seven leading industrialized nations and Russia, should confirm this standard, the Japanese diplomat said.

This means that "every country should take measures to raise the safety of its civil reactors, storage and transportation of radioactive waste and the safety of nuclear materials," the same source said.

Japan wants the Moscow summit to "concentrate on the development of international cooperation for increasing the safety of civil reactors and re-processing radioactive waste," the diplomat said.

"It is necessary to confirm the basic concept of nuclear energy: safety and security issues should be in first place regardless of what arguments may be used: commercial benefit, difficulties concerning energy supply in some countries, and so on," the Japanese diplomat said.

Not only "material" safety measures but also "non-material" safety measures should be increased, the same source said. The diplomat explained that by "material" security measures he meant that only nuclear materials and equipment which are in line with international safety standards should be used while "non-material" safety measures envisage the development of nuclear safety culture and professional skills of those involved in the production of nuclear energy, the adoption of corresponding national legislation and the scope of international cooperation.

Furthermore, "every country needs to produce a system for nuclear compensation which would envisage the responsibility of nuclear plant operators before society, so that victims of nuclear accidents receive appropriate compensation," the diplomat said.

Russia: Hashimoto To Back Reforms at Meeting With Yeltsin

LD1804075896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0721 GMT 18 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Varlamov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 18 — At a meeting with Russian President Boris Yeltsin in Moscow which will be held in the framework of the G-8 summit on nuclear security, Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto "will clearly state" invariability of Tokyo's main course towards Russia, "aimed at support of the policy of reforms, which is now personified by the Russian president", Kazuhiko Togo [as received], minister of the Japanese embassy in Moscow, said in an interview with Itar-Tass here on Thursday.

It is very important that the meeting will take place before the elections in Russia, the diplomat stressed. "This means that if Boris Yeltsin is re-elected, he will have no need for treating Russian-Japanese relations in an abstract way.

"Prime Minister Hashimoto will personify Japan for him. I'm convinced that good, human and personal relations will shape up between Ryutaro Hashimoto and Boris Yeltsin, and, on their basis, they will be able to develop contacts between our countries," Togo added.

The Japanese prime minister's visit to Moscow will be the first in 11 years after the visit by Yashuhiro Nakasone who attended the funeral of Konstantin Chernenko in 1985 and had a brief meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev at that time.

The top leaders of the two countries have not met for two and a half years after the Russian president's visit to Japan in October 1993.

Turning to a possible content of talks in the Kremlin, Togo said that the Japanese side expects, above all, a confirmation of the 1993 Tokyo declaration in the political sphere.

It is expected that the sides will continue to discuss the topic of strengthening bilateral relations in the sphere of security, which was raised by Japanese Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda during his Moscow visit.

There are many issues in the international sphere, which deserve to be discussed by the Russian and Japanese leaders, especially problems concerning the Asia-Pacific region.

This is quite natural, Togo claimed, especially taking into account the fact that Yeltsin will go to China right after the G-8 summit, while North Korea was recently visited by a delegation led by vice-premier Vitaliy Ignatenko.

It is quite probable that the sides will also discuss Russia's full-fledged admission to the G-7 group. Japan supports and encourages Russia's integration into the world economic system on a market basis, the diplomat continued.

But this should be done in line with the development of the Russian economy. "I'm convinced that a good formula, to be backed by the G-7 group, will be found," Togo emphasised.

According to the diplomat, there is no doubt that Yeltsin will participate in the Lyons summit at the discussion of political questions.

Russia: Japanese Official on Dispute Over Kuril Islands

LD1704170996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1430 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TOKYO, April 17 (Interfax) — Settlement of the territorial dispute over the four Kuril islands, and support for Russian reforms as part of international efforts, are key aspects of the Japanese policy on Russia, a high-ranking staff member of the Japanese Foreign Ministry told Interfax special correspondent Renat Abdullin in Tokyo.

He stressed settlement of the territorial issue will enable signing of the bilateral peace treaty and fully normalize relations with Russia.

"A new basis for Russian-Japanese relations was laid down during the Japanese visit of Russian President Boris Yeltsin in October 1993, when the Tokyo declaration was signed," said the diplomat. "Since that time Japan was working to expand political and economic relations with Russia through a political dialogue."

"At high-level negotiations, following Yeltsin's visit to Japan, Tokyo tried to achieve progress in solution of the territorial issue on the basis of the Tokyo declaration," he said. During the Russian visit of the Japanese foreign minister in March 1996, Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov "supported the Tokyo declaration and reaffirmed bilateral relations will develop on its basis," noted the diplomat.

"Japan thinks it especially important to actively work for settlement of the territorial issue, bearing in mind the 40th anniversary of restored bilateral diplomatic relations will be marked this year," he said.

"We are sure the solution of this problem would much help peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region," said the diplomat.

In his words, "Japan introduced visa-less trips for Russian residents of 'the northern territories' in 1992 in order to create the necessary atmosphere for negotiations on the territorial issue. Over 2,300 residents of Russia and Japan used this program within four years and made a weighty contribution to mutual understanding between the two countries."

"Full withdrawal of Russian troops from the northern territories would much help a favorable atmosphere for solution of the territorial issue," he said.

"The Russian intention to withdraw all troops but border guards from the northern territories was voiced by Boris Yeltsin during his visit to Japan." In March 1996 Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov told his Japanese counterpart that some 3,500 servicemen remain in the southern Kurils, and there are no military on Shikotan Island.

Commenting on fishing off shore from the southern Kurils, the diplomat said, "These negotiations have their difficulties, because they are tied to the territorial issue."

The diplomat admitted economic relations with Russia "are poorly developed." Major reasons for this are "non-payments of the uninsured commercial debt, and imperfect laws and tax system of Russia."

He voiced the need for "better trade and investment conditions in order to encourage the private sector."

Russia: Moscow, Taipei Deny Supply of 300 SA-18 Missiles

LD1704142796 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1137 GMT 17 Mar 96

[ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Andrey Kirillov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 17 April — Today, Moscow and Taipei separately denied rumors alleging that Taiwan intends to acquire 300 SA-18 missiles [low-altitude surface-to-air missiles called Igla in Russian] from Russia.

"No one in Russia has the right to conduct talks with Taiwan on this topic. There can be no question of any sale or supply of weapons," a high-ranking representative of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs who wished to remain nameless told the ITAR-TASS correspondent today. "We have no official ties with Taipei," he stressed, adding that Russia maintains only informal contacts with Taiwan.

The ITAR-TASS correspondent in Tokyo, Vladimir Solntsev, reports that Taiwan's Defense Minister Chiang Chung-ling today denied the same reports that Taipei was planning to acquire weapons in Russia. "We are not going to purchase Russian weapons and Russia is not going to supply them to Taiwan," he stated, speaking on local television. The minister's statement was made in response to an enquiry by a deputy of the Taiwanese parliament against a background of rumours on the island about Taipei's intentions to buy 300 SA-18 missiles in Russia.

According to some reports, several years ago Taiwan explored the possibility of acquiring combat planes from Russia but Moscow, realizing that this step would threaten a worsening of relations with Beijing, refused. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has stated on many occasions that in spite of the rapid development of trade and economic ties between Russia and Taiwan the supply of arms from Moscow to Taipei was ruled out.

Russia: Canadian Prime Minister Arrives in Moscow for Summit

LD1704201096 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1940 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 17 Apr (ITAR-TASS) — Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien is the first of the G-7 leaders to arrive in Moscow for a summit on nuclear security. He arrived in Moscow after a short visit to Romania.

In addition to the program of the summit, during his Moscow visit Chretien will have bilateral meetings with the Russian leadership and with other participants in the Moscow forum. On 18 April, Jean Chretien is expected to have talks with Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, and on Friday with President Boris Yeltsin. He is also scheduled to meet the leaders of Great Britain, Germany, Japan, and Ukraine.

On Thursday, Jean Chretien will also attend the opening ceremony of the new Canadian Embassy in Moscow.

On the eve of his visit to Moscow, the Canadian prime minister told ITAR-TASS in Ottawa that he ascribes major importance to the Moscow summit. He said that the participants in the summit will focus their attention on the safe use of atomic energy and the development of international cooperation in this sphere, including the possibility of using and burning weapon-grade plutonium in nuclear reactors. Canada has technology which could be helpful in tackling this issue.

During talks with Boris Yeltsin, an exchange of opinions will take place on the situation in the world and on bilateral relations, which have an "excellent future," Jean Chretien said. In this connection, particular attention will be paid to using both countries' potential in the interests of peace and prosperity for the peoples of Canada and Russia.

Russia: Duma Calls To Lift Sanctions Against Libya

LD1704153496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1104 GMT 17 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 17 — The State Duma has accepted LDP leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's proposal and recommended that President Yeltsin consider a problem of launching a campaign at the UN Security Council to lift sanctions against Libya step-by-step. The resolution on "a possibility of easing economic sanctions against Libya" was passed by 275 lawmakers with 15 votes against and six abstentions.

The draft resolution was submitted to the 450-strong Duma for approval by the faction of liberal democrats and the document was presented by LDP leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy who had recently visited Libya and met its leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

The UN imposed sanctions against Libya in April, 1992 after the Libyan authorities refused to extradite people suspected of involvement in the explosion of a Pan-American airliner over Lockerbie (Scotland) in 1988.

The resolution adopted by the State Duma says that sanctions imposed on Libya by the UN Security Council which were backed by Moscow incurred considerable economic damage to Russia which exceeds 30 billion dollars now.

In this connection, the State Duma recommended to the government to amend its resolution of February 12, 1994 and issue a list of goods and services allowed in trade between the two countries.

Russia: Morocco Ready To Mediate Chechen Conflict

LD1804055296 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0442 GMT 18 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vadim Lagutin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Rabat, 18 Apr — The Kingdom of Morocco expressed its readiness to act as a mediator in the Chechen settlement. This was said in a communique of the Morocco Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation circulated here on Wednesday night [17 April].

"In light of the statement made by the Russian President Boris Yeltsin on the possibility of King Hassan 11 acting as a mediator, Morocco confirms its readiness to come forward as a mediator with the aim of reaching a settlement in the Chechen conflict," the document says.

Political Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Signs Edict on Agricultural Debts, Subsidies

LD1804082396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0718 GMT 18 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW April 17 (Itar-Tass) — President Boris Yeltsin signed a decree which frees agricultural farms from "certain debt payments", envisages state subsidies to them, halves electricity costs for agricultural producers and instructs the government to protect the domestic food market through import quotas and duties.

The press service of the head of state told Tass on Thursday that the decree aims "to promote the creation of favourable conditions for an increase in the production of agricultural raw materials and food.., to further deepen agricultural transformations".

However, the influential "Izvestia" daily commented on Thursday that the wording "agricultural transformations" should have been dropped from the decree as it envisages no market reforms in agriculture, but only state support to the ailing industry to which leading Russian reformers Yegor Gaydar and Boris Fedorov were radically opposed.

The decree signed by Yeltsin during his election campaign trip to the village of Novomyshastovskaya in the southern Krasnodar region envisages "state financing of the restructuring of agricultural organisations, the sanation of loss-making agricultural enterprises, information and personnel provision of the agrarian reform".

"In order to ensure financial stability in the agro-industrial complex, the decree frees agricultural producers from some debt payments", the press service said.

From May 1 the producers will pay only 50 per cent for electricity.

"The government was instructed to regulate the amounts of import duties to protect domestic producers and, if necessary, introduce quotas on import purchases of certain foodstuffs", the press service said.

The document also envisages tax privileges and credits for land acquisition and housing construction.

The Izvestia, in the meantime, said that the previous decree of the president, which allowed to buy and mortgage land, had been actually blocked by the anti-reform-minded State Duma and the government itself as it issued no instructions which would explain how the decree-envisaged measures were to be implemented. The Duma, in its turn, passed the Land code under the first reading, which Izvestia qualified as "an example of curbing reforms".

Russia: Chernomyrdin Prefers 'Civilized Competition' to Import Bans

LD1804110296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1055 GMT 18 Apr 96

[By Gennadiy Yezhov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW April 18 (Itar-Tass) — Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin admitted on Thursday that Russia will have to resort to import bans to protect its domestic producers and keep low-quality food away from the national market, but stressed that he personally stands for "civilised competition".

"We cannot solve the problem only by bans or protective import duties, although both the bans and the import duties will have to be imposed as necessity arises", Chernomyrdin told a government meeting which discussed how to keep foreign low-quality goods away from the national market.

However, the premier stressed that "if we speak about an open economy in a strategical plan, the only correct decision is the development and promotion on our domestic market of an honest and civilised competition".

Still Chernomyrdin said that the share of imported goods, including those from the CIS states, on the Russian market had for the first time exceeded 50 per cent in 1995 and that 80-85 per cent of all quality violations had been registered in food imports.

"Many imported goods occupy a monopoly position on the domestic market", he said adding that "all that inflicts a considerable detriment to the interests of Russian manufacturers".

Chernomyrdin criticised the existing system of state control over shipments of low-quality goods to Russia and urged "to make the protection of the market of the country from low-quality imports an important market institution in Russia".

All the ministries involved in import control were instructed to design the necessary protective measures against low-quality goods in the coming months.

The proposed measures include, in particular: a more efficient quality control by the customs, an analysis of the efficiency of state bodies responsible for the quality of imported goods, certification of imports, measures to protect consumers' rights and others.

Russia: Excerpts of Duma Hearings on Yeltsin Bill

964F1775A Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 6 Apr 96 p 2

[Excerpts from session records of the Russian Federation State Duma Committee on Legislation, the conclusion adopted, and a short commentary by Committee Deputy Chairman Yu. Ivanov: "A Sign of Humiliation—Four State Duma Committees Discuss the President's Draft Law"]

[FBIS Translated Text] As we know, on 20 March 1996 the president introduced by way of legislative initiative the draft Federal Law on Ensuring Stability of the Legal System of the Russian Federation and on Confirming Russia's International Commitments, asking that it be examined on a top-priority basis.

Here is the text of this draft law:

This Federal Law is adopted with the aim of eliminating ambiguity respecting the constitutional-legal basis of resolutions adopted by the State Duma since 15 March 1996, of preserving the procedure for adoption of laws and enactments of the chambers of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly as established by the Russian Federation Constitution adopted by universal vote on 12 December 1993, of avoiding inherent contradictions in the legal system of the Russian Federation, and of confirming Russia's international commitments.

Article 1.

To confirm the validity of laws, normative legal acts, and other enactments of the organs of state authority of the Russian Federation that have not lost their force in accordance with procedure as established by the Russian Federation Constitution in effect, including the Agreement on Establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States ratified by decree of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet and signed in the city of Minsk 8 December 1991, and the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Decree on Denunciation of the Treaty on Formation of the USSR, dated 12 December 1991.

Article 2.

To confirm the validity of international commitments of the Russian Federation that acquired legal force for the Russian Federation prior to the entry into force of this Federal Law, including those based on the Agreement on Establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States ratified by decree of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet and signed in the city of Minsk 8 December 1991, and the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Decree on Denunciation of the Treaty on Formation of the USSR, dated 12 December 1991.

Article 3.

This Federal Law enters into force effective its date of signature by the Russian Federation president.

[signed] President of the Russian Federation B. Yeltsin

On 21 March 1996 the chairman of the State Duma sent this draft law to three committees for conclusions.

We were naturally interested in the opinion of the Committee on Legislation. It is this committee that takes the lead in examining such draft laws. In addition, it is no secret that the committee is comprised exclusively of qualified specialists. It includes four doctors of juridical sciences, four candidates of juridical sciences, lawyers, judges, and other legal experts with vast experience who are well known throughout Russia...

We invite the reader's attention to excerpts from committee session records, the conclusion adopted, and a short commentary by well-known lawyer Yu. Ivanov, deputy chairman of the committee, who delivered the report on this matter.

O. Mironov (CPRF) [Russian Federation Communist Party].

We, as a legislative assembly, can adopt laws, turn laws aside, introduce amendments... But the Constitution does not give us the right to **confirm** previously adopted normative acts. The same applies with respect to **confirmation** of international acts. The Duma only has the right of ratification and denunciation... Nor can we agree with the prospect that the law, as the president proposes, enters into force effective upon date of signature. The "nearest" time frame permitted by the existing law "On the Procedure for Adoption and Publication..."—is as of the time of publication.

Ye. Mizulina (Yabloko).

The basis for proposal of this draft law by the president is the collision we see of norms that appeared in connection with adoption of the 15 March 1996 decree of the State Duma. The law the president has proposed does not eliminate this collision in practical terms... It augments it still further. I am therefore in absolute agreement with my colleagues that this law does not achieve the objective it seeks... If we adopt it, we are buying a pig in a poke.

V. Kiselev (LDPR) [Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia].

Even if we agreed with the president and tried to arrange the "confirmation" he is proposing, it would be impossible to do this for purely technical reasons—we are talking about thousands and thousands of enactments.

A. Kalyagin (city of Vladimir).

It is being proposed that we do something entirely unprecedented—confirm the validity of laws, normative-legal acts, and other enactments of the organs of state authority. After all, in confirming governmental directives, for example, we raise them to the level of law. I believe this law has no legal meaning; it does not engender any legal relations... My impression overall is that if the Duma so much as adopts the concept of such a law, it will make a laughingstock not only of itself, but of the agent of this legislative initiative—the president. In essence, we must help the president "save face" right now, somehow explain things to him tactfully.

N. Zhukova (city of Krasnoyarsk).

We do not have to help the president "save face." I think each one of us should be a little concerned about saving our own "face." Then too, the question of "saving face" is not a legal one. As far as the law is concerned, the Constitution stipulates what the Duma's job is. The president's proposals are in contradiction to the Constitution...

V. Grebennikov (Russia Is Our Home).

In essence, it is difficult not to agree with what my colleagues have said. From the legal point of view, we cannot agree to the proposed draft law. I say this with regret because I myself am part of the president's team. I do not feel very good about this.

A. Chernogorov (city of Stavropol).

I took this draft law of the president back to my region and showed it to our prominent legal experts. They simply ridiculed it. They said first-year law students could not have written such a draft...

A. Lukyanov.

The draft law mentions some kind of legal ambiguity created by a decree of the Duma. But it is precisely the draft law being proposed by the president which injects such ambiguity. All normative acts "are suspended" unless they have been confirmed. The same applies to international agreements. There are approximately 500 agreements among the CIS countries and 15,000-20,000 agreements with countries of the far abroad... Look at what happens. If we confirm all the enactments of the organs of state authority, we are then confirming, for example, all the acts promulgated by Dudayev's Chechnya, a Federation entity...

The Committee resolves:

Having examined the draft Federal Law introduced by the Russian Federation president, the State Duma Committee on Legislation and Judicial-Legal Reform stipulates:

That the norm contained in Article 1 of the draft law is not in conformance with the Russian Federation Constitution, insofar as the State Duma is not afforded the right to confirm the validity of laws, normative and legal acts, or other enactments of the organs of state authority. According to the Russian Federation Constitution, the State Duma may adopt new laws, introduce amendments and additions to these laws, and repeal existing laws.

The same thing is applicable with respect to Article 2 of the draft law. The State Duma has the right of ratification and denunciation, but does not have the right of confirmation of international treaties.

Article 3 of the draft law contradicts the Law on Procedure for the Publication and Entry Into Force of Russian Federation Laws, since the latter does not envisage the possibility of entry into force of federal laws effective their date of signature by the Russian Federation president.

Adoption of this law by the State Duma and Federation Council would create a precedent entirely without parallel in world legal practice and would place Russia's highest legislative authority in an ambiguous position.

We believe that in the situation where, in the president's view, there exists a "need to eliminate ambiguity respecting the constitutional-legal basis of resolutions adopted by the State Duma," the president may exercise his right to eliminate such ambiguity through appropriate appeals to the Supreme Court.

The committee recommends that the State Duma disallow the draft law proposed by the president as being devoid of legal content and in contradiction to the Russian Federation Constitution.

Adopted unanimously.

Commentary by Yu. Ivanov

The draft conclusion was drawn up jointly by myself and Deputy Pokhmelkin (Russia's Choice) and elicited no argument between us—the draft law is devoid of legal content.

My colleagues on the committee expressed a number of observations—mainly editorial in nature—which were taken into account. In other words, I would emphasize that this conclusion was adopted unanimously, irrespective of political biases.

This is entirely understandable. Professional legal experts work actively for their political movements, of course, but there are situations where having voted or merely expressed a view in support of what one knows to be "untrue," such an individual finds himself forever dishonored as a professional.

In this sense it is exceedingly important that we openly cite those representatives of the legal profession who are today drawing up such draft laws. We now know the "authors" from television broadcasts of the program "Itogi" [Results]. One of these, Baturin, stated directly that the draft law was drawn up by the president's assistants. By the nature of duties as they are performed, we can accurately name four: Baturin himself, Krasnov, Ryurikov, and Satarov. The last individual here named is far-removed from law—he is a mathematician who considers himself a political scientist and is constantly ferreting around in the corners of the television companies. Therefore, you will get nothing out of him. But the production of such a draft by Doctors of Legal Sciences Baturin and Krasnov—is shameful. Why did these "assistants" manufacture such a mockery of the law? After all, professionally speaking, as legal experts they are without a doubt highly qualified people.

I think there can be but one explanation. They understand full well that most deputies would never vote for such a law because that would entail entirely unprecedented humiliation. But why humiliate the legislators? After all, in this instance it is not only deputies who are being insulted. This tramples upon the dignity of all of Russia that voted for these deputies. Baturin and Krasnov are counting on the draft law being disallowed—they need this. They need to destabilize the situation in the country, to initiate confrontation between the legislative and executive branches, to create conditions analogous to those of October 1993. Their chief—the president—is always ready to do battle. With whom? With Ligachev, Gorbachev, Khasbulatov, Rutskoy, the Supreme Soviet, the Duma, the "communist idol"... Today he has selected a new enemy— Zyuganov, whom he recently advised before the whole world not to go to the Duma..." in a BTR [armored personnel carrier]." Alas, both awake and asleep, Boris Nikolayevich sees all his opponents exclusively in armored personnel carriers.

In the light of what has taken place, every Russian citizen should understand two things on the eve of the presidential election: First of all, that a vote for Yeltsin is a vote for the Baturins and Satarovs, for all those assistants with a Taman-Kantemir slant; and secondly, that as long as Yeltsin is around, no political forces in Russia will be able to reach agreement—the president with the "BTR world view" will not allow it...

[begin box] Discussion of the draft law proposed by President Yeltsin was conducted in other committees of the State Duma as well.

The International Affairs Committee (V.P. Lukin) agreed with the main provisions of the conclusion drawn up by the Committee on Legislation.

The Committee on Security (V.I. Ilyukhin) recommends that the Duma disallow the draft law "as not having an instrument of legal regulation."

The Committee on CIS Affairs (G.I. Tikhonov) perceives the draft law as "a legal precedent unknown in international practice," and believes that "it has no legal content." [end box]

Russia: Yeltsin Signs Federal, Local Power Delimitation Statute

964F1792A Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 3

[Edict of the President of the Russian Federation: "Confirmation of the Procedure of Work on the Delimitation of Terms of Reference and Authority Between Federal Institutions of State Power and Institutions of State Power of Components of the Russian Federation and on the Mutual Transfer of the Exercise of Part of Their Authority to the Federal Institutions of Executive Power and the Institutions of Executive Power of Components of the Russian Federation"; and "Statute on the Procedure of Work on the Delimitation of Terms of Reference and Authority Between Federal Institutions of State Power and Institutions of State Power of Components of the Russian Federation and on the Mutual Transfer of the Exercise of Part of Their Authority to the Federal Institutions of Executive Power and the Institutions of Executive Power of Components of the Russian Federation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] For the streamlining and creation of common conditions of the preparation of draft treaties and agreements and also legislative and other normative legal acts on the delimitation of terms of reference and authority between federal institutions of state power and institutions of state power of components of the Russian Federation I resolve:

1. To confirm the attached Statute on the Procedure of Work on the Delimitation of Terms of Reference and Authority Between Federal Institutions of State Power and Institutions of State Power of Components of the Russian Federation and on the Mutual Transfer of the Exercise of Part of Their Authority to the Federal Institutions of Executive Power and the Institutions of Executive Power of Components of the Russian Federation.

2. To deem as having lapsed clause 3 of the Statute on the Commission in the Office of the President of the Russian Federation on the Preparation of Treaties

on the Delimitation of Terms of Reference and Authority Between Federal Institutions of State Power and Institutions of State Power of Components of the Russian Federation confirmed by Edict No. 1499 of the president of the Russian Federation of 20 July 1994 "Formation of a Commission in the Office of the President of the Russian Federation on the Preparation of Treaties on the Delimitation of Terms of Reference and Authority Between Federal Institutions of State Power and Institutions of State Power of Components of the Russian Federation" (SOBRANIYE ZAKONODATELSTVA ROSSIYSKOY FEDERATSII No 13, 1994, entry 1475).

3. That this edict shall take effect the day it is published.

[signed] B. Yeltsin, president of the Russian Federation

[dated] The Kremlin, Moscow, 12 March 1996
No. 370

Statute on the Procedure of Work on the Delimitation of Terms of Reference and Authority Between Federal Institutions of State Power and Institutions of State Power of Components of the Russian Federation and on the Mutual Transfer of the Exercise of Part of Their Authority to the Federal Institutions of Executive Power and the Institutions of Executive Power of Components of the Russian Federation

1. Terms of reference and authority shall be delineated between federal institutions of state power and institutions of state power of components of the Russian Federation by the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Federative Treaty, and other treaties on the delimitation of terms of reference and authority.

2. Questions of the preparation of treaties on the delimitation of terms of reference and authority between federal institutions of state power and institutions of state power of components of the Russian Federation (hereinafter called treaties, treaty) and their legal backing shall be considered preliminarily by the Commission in the Office of the President of the Russian Federation on the Preparation of Treaties on the Delimitation of Terms of Reference and Authority Between Federal Institutions of State Power and Institutions of State Power of Components of the Russian Federation (hereinafter called the Commission).

3. The Commission's principal objectives shall be:

— the organization and performance of expert evaluation of draft treaties and also agreements supplementing them and the presentation of findings on these drafts to the president of the Russian Federation;

— support for the interaction of federal institutions of executive power and institutions of executive power of components of the Russian Federation on matters connected with the preparation and conclusion of treaties and agreements on the delimitation of authority;

— participation in the elaboration of draft legislative and other normative legal acts on the delimitation of terms of reference and authority between federal institutions of state power and institutions of state power of components of the Russian Federation;

— the drafting of proposals on the monitoring of the observance by the corresponding parties of the adopted commitments specified by the treaties and agreements that have been concluded and also the monitoring of the fulfillment of the decisions of the president of the Russian Federation on matters within the competence of the Commission.

On matters requiring a decision of the president of the Russian Federation the Commission shall submit the corresponding proposals in the established procedure.

4. When working on draft treaties and agreements, the Commission shall proceed from the following provisions:

— the principles of the delimitation of terms of reference and authority between institutions of state power of the Russian Federation and institutions of state power of components of the Russian Federation shall be established by federal laws;

— the authority of federal institutions of state power and the institutions of state power of a specific component of the Russian Federation shall be delineated by treaty;

— a treaty may not establish or alter the constitutional status of a component of the Russian Federation;

— the withdrawal or redistribution in the treaty of terms of reference of the Russian Federation and terms of joint reference of the Russian Federation and components of the Russian Federation established by Articles 71 and 72 respectively of the Constitution of the Russian Federation shall not be permitted;

— a treaty with institutions of state power of a component of the Russian Federation that did not participate in the signing of the Federative Treaty or that has been newly formed may contain a full list of the terms of joint reference of the Russian Federation and the component of the Russian Federation in accordance with Article 72 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation;

— the treaty may determine terms of joint reference conditioned by geographical, economic, social, national, and other salient features of a specific component of the Russian Federation;

— after a treaty has been signed, agreements that are an integral part thereof may be concluded on a delimitation of authority on specific terms of joint reference established by Article 72 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and enumerated in the treaty, unless this authority has been established by federal law;

— authority of federal institutions of executive power pertaining to the assurance of guarantees of preservation of the essentials of the constitutional system of the Russian Federation, equal rights of components of the Russian Federation, and the equality of rights and liberties of man and citizen throughout the Russian Federation and also other authority shall not be transferable if its transfer signifies a violation of the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation and the supremacy of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal laws throughout the Russian Federation.

5. Draft treaties and agreements shall be prepared in the following procedure:

— draft treaties and agreements shall be submitted to the Commission by the highest official of the component of the Russian Federation authorized by the constitution (charter) of the component of the Russian Federation to represent the component of the Russian Federation within the country (hereinafter called the authorized party of the component of the Russian Federation);

— at the behest of the chairman of the Commission, federal institutions of executive power shall be required within 10 days' time to furnish the Commission with their findings and proposals on the draft treaty and agreements;

— the Commission shall present the treaty to the president of the Russian Federation together with its findings;

— the Commission shall present draft agreements to the chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation together with its findings;

— the treaty shall be signed by the president of the Russian Federation and the authorized party of the component of the Russian Federation;

— the agreements shall be signed by the chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation and the authorized party of component of the Russian Federation.

6. The Commission shall consider also agreements on:

— the transfer by federal institutions of executive power of the exercise of part of their authority to institutions of executive power of a component of the Russian Federation, unless this conflicts with the Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal laws;

— the transfer by institutions of executive power of a component of the Russian Federation of the exercise of part of their authority to federal institutions of executive power.

The drafts of the said agreements shall be presented to the Commission by the leaders of the federal institutions of executive power and the leaders of the institutions of executive power of the components of the Russian Federation respectively.

The Commission shall present the draft agreements to the Government of the Russian Federation together with its findings.

The agreements shall be signed by the chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation or a representative of a federal institution of executive power authorized by the latter and the authorized party of the component of the Russian Federation.

7. The treaties and agreements shall take effect following their official publication.

8. Disputes on matters of the delimitation of terms of reference and authority between federal institutions of state power and institutions of state power of components of the Russian Federation shall be settled with the use of conciliation procedures.

In the event of an accord not being reached, a dispute may be submitted for consideration by the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation in accordance with parts 2 and 3 of Article 125 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and also by the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation and the Supreme Court of Arbitration of the Russian Federation in accordance with their jurisdiction.

9. The signed treaties and agreements shall be kept in the Archives of the President of the Russian Federation and in the Government Archives of the Russian Federation respectively.

10. Observance of the provisions of treaties and agreements that have taken effect shall be monitored by the Office of the President of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Russian Federation.

Russia: Orlov Urges Social Democratic Approach

964F1764A Moscow LITERATURNAYA GAZETA in Russian 3 Apr 96 No 14, p 11

[Article by Boris Orlov: "Let Us Not Confuse Social Democracy With Neo-Bolshevik Sham! Our Liberals, Suffering From Political Color-Blindness, See All Cats as Red"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Boris Sergeyevich Orlov, doctor of historic sciences, is a senior research associate with the INION [Scientific Information on Social Sciences Institute] of the Russian Academy of Sciences. In 1991-1992 he was a member of the Social-Democratic Party of Russia's leadership.

Russia is living today through a verbal social-democratic boom of sorts. Even those, who only yesterday contended that social democracy would not take root in Russia—wrong mentality, wrong social environment, they said—are today practically beginning to operate by traditional social-democratic recipes. This also goes for the "party of power," which finally figured out that without social care for citizens it cannot get support in the elections. The opposition, as represented by the Communists, also talk in the same key, suddenly uttering the words absolutely alien to the communist ideology—such as multisectoral economy, protection of small businessman, and political pluralism. For this reason, Zyuganov is now counted as social democrat. As are all those who put the words "social protection of the population" in their program statements.

One of the reasons is the unwitting identification of social democrats with Communists. It developed this way historically, first of all because until 1917 the Communist Party functioned under the name "social-democratic." And political scientists also contribute to such understanding, classifying the Communists and social democrats as part of leftist political forces, and apparently justifying it by the fact that both make defense of social justice a priority. In doing that, they miss, however, the fact that Communists and social democrats represent completely different, if not antagonistic, political cultures. The former are for revolutionary violence. The latter are for evolutionary reforms. The former try to disguise their political dominance by various forms of "people's power." The latter work on the premise that representative democracy enables the guarantee of basic rights and freedoms for the whole population and not just the mythologized "workers."

As far back as the cusp of the century, social democrats in the person of E. Bernstein questioned the correctness of Marx's predictions, and later rejected altogether the creation of the socialist model on the so-called scientific basis, having seen the results this "experiment" produced in neighboring Russia. Today social democrats prefer to speak of a society of social democracy toward which one should constantly strive by giving increasingly more practical content to such moral values as freedom, justice, and solidarity. Although we should note for objectivity's sake that there are also parties that retain the name "socialist." Just as within social-democratic parties there are proponents of socialist ideas, who interpret them differently from Communists, and place an emphasis on unfailing observance of democratic principles ("democratic socialism").

The evolution social-democrats have undergone in this century practically remained outside the field of view of the intelligentsia forming in the Soviet Union behind the "iron curtain." For a while it was fed the Stalinist theory of "social-fascism," about which, by the way, Mr. Zyuganov prefers to remain silent; later the opinion softened somewhat, but still, social-democrats were routinely branded as opportunists, betrayers of working class interests, and accomplices of the bourgeoisie. Only some time in the 1970's were the first contacts established between the Soviet Union's Communists and Western social democrats, with the Soviet side nevertheless emphasizing that any rapprochement on ideological issues was out of the question.

This means, however, that the processes of understanding the new phenomena taking place among the social-democratic community remained outside the thinking intelligentsia's field of vision. And even among those who consider themselves knowledgeable in the spiritual life of the West, not too many know, for instance, that it was the social democrats who were the first to identify the kinship between the two versions of totalitarian regimes—Hitler's national-socialism and Stalin's Bolshevism. Those who want to learn more about this, I would refer to the Socialist International's "Frankfurt Declaration," adopted in 1951, that is, at the time when the enlightened European intelligentsia could not yet imagine the scale of the crimes on Stalinism's conscience. Only the "GULAG Archipelago" opened their eyes.

Another cause—and also a failure—was indecisiveness of the CPSU leadership, headed by M. Gorbachev, at the time when the need arose to cross the "communist Rubicon." There were enough people in the party, especially in Moscow, who were ready to support the emerging strategy of political and economic reforms, halfhearted as it was. Two wings emerged in the CPSU—the "orthodox" and the "reformers." A small act of will on the part of M. Gorbachev (with his powers of general secretary!) would have been enough to create on the basis of the already-created "democratic platform" a socialist party similar to those now functioning in a number of East European counties. Of course, they would not be social democrats in the full meaning of the word. But it would have been a serious turn in the direction of social democracy. The expected did not happen. As a result, the reformers left the CPSU but did not walk all the way to the emerging social-democratic organizations. Many of them are still in that suspended state, living, as I know by the example of some of my acquaintances, through far from the best of times. While the Communists, having thus rid themselves of "renegades," moved on, to once again conquer Russia. Free to do so since at the fault of the same democrats, they had escaped a Russian version of the "Nuremberg trial," which they indeed deserved.

Apparently, there are also other reasons why social democracy is being rejected. To be honest, I was surprised when one Radio Liberty commentator in a "roundtable" discussion advocated the need "to fight against social democracy." That is precisely what he said: "fight." I was doubly surprised because I knew that this commentator had lived for some time in Austria and thus had the opportunity to get acquainted first-hand with the long history of the Austrian social democrats' work.

By the way, citing the experience of European social democrats does not mean at all that it should be literally copied in every way. This is difficult, if for no other reason than because they are all different. It would be hard to confuse British Laborites with German social democrats, let alone Swedish social democrats. What unites them is a common approach to the solution of social problems—achieving an atmosphere of social accord on the basis of the "social partnership" mechanism in a democratic environment and only by democratic methods. As to shortcomings, they are plenty, for which voters keep sending the social democrats to the opposition bench. The most recent example is that of the Spanish socialists, who were retired after 13 years of uninterrupted rule.

However, having kept social democrats on the reserve bench for a while, the voters then show them confidence again. The result is something like a pendulum between social-democratic and liberal-conservative poles. Hence, the conclusion: Society needs both.

This circumstance, in my opinion, was completely disregarded by those whom I call "politically engaged intelligentsia." There is no need to prove that the condition of observance of human rights and freedoms is the establishment of democracy, which permits the population to elect authorities at different levels and keep their activities under control on the basis of other democratically formed institutions. The historic achievement of liberals in establishing this order of things is inarguable. Just as obvious is the liberals' achievement in developing mechanisms of competitive market solutions on the basis of private property. However, as the long practice of the aforementioned European countries showed, by themselves these mechanisms for a variety of reasons do not remove social tension existing in a concrete society, first of all for the banal reason that people are all different. Whoever takes upon himself the difficult mission of ensuring relative stability in society by political means has an obligation to find solutions that permit the establishment of a certain equilibrium between freedom, including freedom of entrepreneurial activities, and social justice.

Hence, we have arrived back where we started. In my view the mistake of our home-grown liberals and their intellectual supporters is that they, to put it simply, do not bother to deal with the solution to this extremely difficult correlation, apparently counting on the fact that democratic order and market relations will put everything in its place naturally. When Ye. Gaydar and his team freed prices for goods and foodstuffs, they could estimate, of course, what social effect it would have. And, for instance, issue government IOU's to those whose meager "rainy day" savings were "eaten up" by inflation, with the obligation to pay it back in 20 or 30 or 50 years. This practice has long been worked out in other countries. They did not think about it, did not take it into account. The result is well known: Those whose "funeral" money was so unceremoniously expropriated will never forgive Gaydar this step, just as Khrushchev will never be forgiven for ordering, in his time, what amounted taking away from the peasants the cattle kept on their private plots. Hence, the conclusion: He who does not propose a competent, civilized solution to the resulting social problem pushes those affected by this action into the camp of opponents of democracy. One does not have to be a genius to arrive at the obvious conclusion: He who ignores social problems in their concrete manifestation of "today" is for all intents and purposes playing into the hands of the Communists and their supporters.

That is why it seems imperative to me that we draw on the practice and experience of social democracy, which permits a combination of the market and social reforms. In doing so, we should keep in mind that using the social-democratic tool kit of, for instance, state regulation is made infinitely more difficult by the fact that the people who are still stuck in the command-administrative mentality are permitted to play this economic "score," to use musical language.

This means that social democracy requires highly skilled specialists guided by the call of their conscience rather than by fear or bare pursuit of a career.

Who then can be considered true social democrats in Russia? S. Fedorov's Party of Workers Self-Government? The Social-Democratic Party of the

Russian Federation? A. Yakovlev's Party of Social Democracy? The G. Popov and V. Lipitskiy group? Other groups that claim social-democratic representation, whose number grows with each passing day?

I would answer as follows: Whichever party or movement finds the optimum solution to the problem of social justice in the environment of market relations, taking into account the Russian mentality and necessarily observing the principles of morality in politics, will be the sought-for social democracy that Russia needs.

We have to be clearly aware that there is no such established party. Meanwhile, ghosts wander around Russia. Trying on social-democratic clothes, confusing the inexperienced philistine—and sometimes even the apparently experienced Western neighbor.

This is the reason the need to create an effectively functioning social democracy keeps coming up again and again. As to those who keep counting on liberal methods of problem-solving, I find it necessary to remind them once again: You do not want social democracy—you will get national-Bolshevism with its famous slogan "rob the robbers." Only a civilized solution to the deepest need of Russian society spanning the centuries—the need for social justice—will allow us to ensure a healthy future for Russia.

Russia: Constitutional Court Rejects Maritime Kray Petition

LD1704124396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1002 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] VLADIVOSTOK, April 17 (Interfax-Eurasia) — Russia's Constitutional Court turned down the petition of the Maritime territorial Duma to verify the constitutionality of the decision of Russia's Supreme Soviet dated May 16, 1991 on ratification of the Sino-Soviet agreement on border demarcation, deputy head of the legal department from the Maritime territorial Duma Valentin Bykhanov told Interfax-Eurasia.

The petition was rejected because the plaintiffs have not observed the procedure of address to Russia's Constitutional Court, according to Bykhanov.

The Maritime Duma forwarded its petition to the Constitutional Court in March having approved it at an emergency session. The legal department, Bykhanov said, has started correcting the procedure inaccuracies. After that deputies of the territorial duma will hold a special session in order to adopt an address to the Constitutional Court.

The Parliamentary Association "Far East and Transbaykal Region," which is currently holding its session in Vladivostok, has supported the idea of repeatedly addressing the Constitutional Court, chairman of the Maritime territorial Duma Vladimir Vedernikov told Interfax-Eurasia. The association also adopted an address to the region's legislative assemblies to resume considering the issue on demarcation of the Russian-Chinese border on its eastern section and to express their opinion on this issue.

Leaders and deputies from representative power bodies from Yakutia, the Maritime and Khabarovsk territories, the Magadan, Sakhalin and Chita regions, the Jewish autonomous region, the Aginskiy-Buryatskiy and Koryak autonomous districts are attending the session of the Parliamentary Assembly "Far East and Transbaykal Region."

Military, Nuclear & Space Issues

Russia: General Denies Nuclear Construction in Urals

LD1804142296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1256 GMT 18 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Apr 18 (Interfax) — The commander of Russia's missile forces, Col. Gen. Igor Sergeyev, has denied allegations that an underground anti-nuclear bunker is under construction outside the city of Beloretsk in Bashkortostan near the Yamantau Mountain.

"No construction connected with the deployment of nuclear arms is underway either in the area of the Ural Mountains or in other parts of Russia, and we are prepared to prove this on all levels," the general told Interfax on Thursday.

The Americans have already carried out about 100 inspections of Russian military nuclear facilities falling under the START-I agreement, Sergeyev pointed out. "The inspections were very thorough, but no complaints concerning nuclear forces were made," the general said.

Russia is not planning to build any new facilities for the stationing of nuclear arms, the general said.

At present the missile forces are engaged in modernizing intercontinental ballistic missiles of the Topol type, he said. In future, they will be replaced with more advanced Topol-M missiles, Sergeyev said.

Russia: Secret Urals Bunker 'Not Quite' Part of Retaliatory System

MK1704130396 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 17 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Pavel Felgengauer: "Russian 'Dead Hand' Vexes Americans. They Want Russia To Disclose the Secret of the Antinuclear Bunker Near Yamantau Mountain"]

[FBIS Translated Text] THE NEW YORK TIMES published sensational material in yesterday's morning issue about Moscow's new threatening military preparations. Citing space intelligence data, it reports the construction of a large underground facility — an antinuclear bunker — in the area of Beloretsk (Bashkiria) near Yamantau Mountain. True, its construction began back in the 1980's, but unlike many other large-scale military projects that were started in the Soviet era, efforts to build the antinuclear bunker outside Beloretsk have continued even after the Soviet power's demise despite the perennial shortage of funds in the defense budget.

Many American specialists think that the new facility is designed to host a large command post and that in principle the strengthening of the Russian system of control over strategic nuclear forces will only bolster the existing balance of forces with the United States. Others think that the Russians are hiding underground something bad and aggressive and that American assistance to Russia appropriated under the Nunn-Lugar program for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction should be stopped once the Russians have funds for such "cyclopean" projects. But what vexes Pentagon spokesmen most of all is that they do not know for certain the purpose for which the facility in the Urals is being built.

For several years now a view has circulated among competent American specialists linking the Urals facility to the "Dead Hand" system being created in Russia, that is, an automatic system for delivering a retaliatory strike when the top political leadership and the General Staff are already destroyed or deprived of communications equipment as a result of an enemy attack. According to American sources, this system consists of a set of special command bunkers, low-frequency underground transmitting aerials, and special silo-launched ballistic missiles that are to be automatically launched into space as soon as ground sensors report a nuclear attack on Russian territory. Then an order from space is to be given to the remaining nuclear submarines, aircraft in the air, and still existing ground-based launchers to deliver a retaliatory strike.

If "Dead Hand" is launched, Moscow will be able to give up the strategy of a "surprise counterstroke," which calls for the immediate launch of strategic missiles in the event that the early warning system should inform of a missile attack. This strategy envisions that "our" missiles should be off before enemy missiles reach the territory of the Russian Federation. Therefore, in the event of a "surprise counterstroke" the time the top military and political leadership has at its disposal to make a final decision on an all-out nuclear war is measured in minutes. The emergence of the "Dead Hand" system will enable Moscow to switch from the "surprise counterstroke" strategy to the strategy of a pure "counterstroke," which would correspondingly reduce the threat of an incidental outbreak of nuclear war.

Competent Russian sources generally do not rule out — on condition that they are not further identified — that "Dead Hand" is in fact being created and, as far as one can judge, is nearly ready to operate. But it is said that the bunker under construction in the Urals is "not quite" a part of this system.

The Americans, apparently, want clarity. Evidently, the article in THE NEW YORK TIMES, published on the eve of the G-8 summit in Moscow on matters of nuclear safety, is designed to prod the Russian leadership to lay its cards on the table.

Russia: Grachev, Yeltsin 'Out on a Limb' After Reform Comment

MM1804092296 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Viktor Litovkin: "Grachev Again Puts Himself and the President Out on a Limb"]

[FBIS Translated Text] "Immediately after the presidential elections the Armed Forces command will announce a plan for in-depth reform in the Army," Russian Defense Minister Army General Grachev declared in the Urals, according to INTERFAX. According to him, the country's president already knows of this plan.

But the editorial office's attempts to find out what the plan contains ended in failure. "I am not familiar with this plan," we were told by Lieutenant General Lev Rokhlin, chairman of the State Duma Defense Committee. The Russian State Commission for Military Organizational Development, which according to the president's edict is headed by Viktor Chernomyrdin, also knew nothing of it. The statement also came as a surprise to Grachev's immediate deputies. A scientific conference on problems of military reform attended by many high-ranking commanders has been going on for two days at the General Staff Academy, but they too had heard nothing of the new reform plan.

Experts of my acquaintance say that the point is not that this plan is particularly secret, but that it scarcely has any existence at all outside the head of Pavel Sergeyevich or his intimates. After all, if such a plan existed, the president could make it public ahead of the elections, winning many votes from the military. But if this is going to happen after the elections, what is the point of the defense minister's statement? Perhaps only that he wanted to hint that the plan will be made public under a new president?

Be that as it may, so experts claim, whether Grachev wanted this or not, once again he has certainly put himself and his president out on a limb.

Russia: Grachev Explains Reasons for Armed Forces Reform Delays

MM1804105096 Moscow TRUD in Russian 18 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Maksim Yurchenko: "The Army on the Eve of Reforms"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The editorial office receives letters from readers asking for details about the forthcoming reform in the Army. They ask specifically about the substantial cutbacks in personnel. There are also numerous questions about the status of the forces; readers ask: Are we not lagging behind the Americans in the technical sphere?

Russia's Defense Minister Pavel Sergeyevich Grachev answers our readers:

"Looking at matters realistically, and no matter how much the government and the Defense Ministry may wish to do so, they are not in a position to embark on the reform right away. The reason is obvious: The state has no money. There is also the fact that the Chechen war has 'swallowed' vast sums of money which had earlier been earmarked for improvements in the forces. For example, considerable amounts from the Defense Ministry's budget have been channeled just into supplies for the military grouping in Chechnya. These are the rubles which had earlier been allocated from the budget for the construction of military housing.

"This is why today we are setting ourselves realistic tasks. The main one could be formulated as follows: To preserve the Armed Forces' combat ability, maintain their operational capability and defense might at the level required to meet contemporary demands, and complete the organizational building of the Army which started following the collapse of the USSR.

"Some people think that funds for a fundamental restructuring can be found if the planned personnel cutbacks were to be effected quickly. I must explain that the discharge of a vast number of servicemen into the reserve would involve costs which, as the saying goes, we have not even dreamed of. It is, after all, necessary to bear in mind that we cannot chuck people out, leaving them without a roof over their heads and without a penny in their pockets. Under the law, each person discharged into the reserve must be paid an allowance equivalent to 22 minimum wages and his family must be housed. The state treasury does not have that kind of money. Nor should we ignore another social aspect — the overwhelming majority of people discharged into the reserve will encounter employment difficulties. We are talking about young and healthy men who — and this must not be forgotten — are well trained and are used to leading an organized life; where would they channel their energies once they have been abandoned to the vagaries of fate?... Therefore, Army cutbacks are not the best possible option for finding money to fund military reform.

"There is a plan for far-reaching reforms but, not matter in how much of a hurry we might be, there is still a long time to go before Army reforms are launched on a broad scale. But this time period will not turn into an era of stagnation. The Armed Forces continue and will continue to improve themselves, primarily in the technical sphere — the incumbent government is seeking all possibilities to achieve this.

"Just one example. Many people know that Operation Desert Storm had been thoroughly 'rehearsed' well before the start of its implementation, using modern computer technology for all aspects of training and for all possible options as regards the development of events. This is what enabled the Americans to achieve effective success. Furthermore, they had no need to conduct detailed and large-scale exercises and 'rehearse on the spot' the forthcoming operation. Vast sums of money were saved in this way.

Until very recently Russia did not have such technical means for operation development. Today we have them. Regardless of the well-known difficulties, one organization has managed to assemble brilliant scientists from the defense complex and offer them all the conditions they need for their work. Their labor has produced electronic simulators, whose virtual reality display screens make it possible to forecast and almost experience for real the possible events in the theater of military operations. Had this computer technology been available to us a couple of years earlier, had we made use of it to plan the operations in Chechnya, the effectiveness of the federal forces' actions would have been incomparably greater. Such modern means of group training must henceforth become the basis of the material and technical backup for Army and Navy reform."

The letters received by the editorial office also contain quite a few other questions about Army life. You will find the answers to them in TRUD's future issues. These answers will come straight from the horse's mouth — explanations will be offered by P. Grachev and other Defense Ministry leaders.

Russia: Grachev Ends Inspection Tour of Ural Military District

LD1704225796 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1453 GMT 17 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nadezhda Potapova]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yekaterinburg, 17 Apr (Itar-Tass) — This evening Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev concluded his inspection trip to the Urals Military District and Sverdlovsk Region by signing an agreement on financing a state defense order via the territorial treasury. He visited several of the district's units and subunits and checked the standard of the servicemen's training and living conditions in military cantonments.

An agreement between the Defense Ministry, Finance Ministry, and Sverdlovsk Region governor should ease the financial tension between the military-industrial complex and the Russian Government, which does not pay on time and does not advance the money for its state order for military equipment. The state's debt to the region's defense enterprises for the work carried out in 1995-96 amounts to date to 651 billion rubles. Because of this, wages have not been paid for months, and suppliers have not been paid for component parts. Now the region has the right to take this money from the taxes collected for the federal budget.

At today's meeting with the heads of the region's military and industrial complex, responding to the criticism from the defense industry workers — who have been working without a clearly formulated state order for 1996 and without any idea of what the army may need in future — Pavel Grachev specified the size of the state order for all kinds of military equipment and armaments.

After laying flowers at the monument to Marshal G.K. Zhukov, the defense minister flew to Moscow.

Russia: Grachev: Only Contract Servicemen To Be Sent To Hot Spots

LD1704174296 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1100 GMT 17 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Yevgeniy Tkachenko]

[FBIS Translated Text] Chebarkul (Chelyabinsk Region), 17 Apr (Itar-Tass) — The Russian defense minister is a supporter of professionalism in the Army. This was confirmed today by Pavel Grachev when speaking to officers of the Chebarkul Division. He noted that when legislation has been brought into line, people in service will be able to engage in civilian work for about three years. The minister gave an assurance today that henceforth, only Russian contract servicemen will be sent to trouble spots.

Pavel Grachev is conducting an inspection of units in the Urals Military District. He attended tank troop field exercises, viewed an exhibition at the division of examples of equipment manufactured by the Miass automobile works, and signed a letter on the purchase of 3,000 Ural trucks for the armed forces. The minister praised collaboration between the Chelyabinsk Region authorities and Army subunits stationed there.

Russia: Atomic Energy Minister Supports Nuclear Test Ban

LD1704141396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1230 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 17 (Interfax) — Russia will continue to speak out in favor of a complete ban on all nuclear testing, Deputy Atomic Energy Minister Lev Ryabev told a briefing Wednesday in connection with the April 19-20 Moscow summit on nuclear safety.

Only China still supports the detonation of nuclear weapons for peaceful purposes, he said. Russia could, in principle, agree with this position, but only if every other government also spoke out for the possibility of carrying out nuclear testing for peaceful purposes, Ryabev said.

"Most governments are now against this," he said. "But I do not exclude the possibility of a special conference on this topic."

Some 115 nuclear explosions have taken place in the USSR for peaceful purposes, he said, particularly to sound the earth's seismic readings.

Russia is fully carrying out its part in decreasing its nuclear weapons stock, Ryabev said. "Russia is dismantling its nuclear warheads twice as fast as the United States," he said.

As for the Russian nuclear energy situation, Ryabev said that the main problem now is nonpayments by electricity consumers, who owe 4.5 trillion rubles. Despite financial difficulties, however, Russia's nuclear power plants will produce 25-38 million kilowatts, up from the current 21.3 million, he said.

Russia is not planning to junk the RBMK Chernobyl-type reactors ahead of schedule, Ryabev said, as that would require about $12 million-$15 million. The accident safeguard systems have been significantly improved on all these reactors since the 1986 catastrophe, he said.

Russia: Minister Says Recovered Plutonium Will Last 20-30 Years

LD1804141996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1256 GMT 18 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 18 (Interfax) — It will take Russia between 20 and 30 years to utilize plutonium extracted from dismantled nuclear warheads, Atomic Energy Minister Viktor Mikhaylov told a news conference in Moscow on Thursday.

In four years, a facility will be built in Chelyabinsk region where 40 percent of all such plutonium will be stored, he said.

He said the facility would be put under the control of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), but that Russia was not yet prepared to put all of its weapons-grade plutonium under IAEA control. "The problem can be solved only after all the nuclear powers take new steps in disarmament," Mikhaylov said. He said nuclear disarmament was not on the agenda for the Moscow summit of the G-7 countries plus Russia to be held on April 19-20.

Mikhaylov said the utilization of 500 tonnes of highly enriched weapons-grade uranium-235 would take about 20 years as well. Last year Russia processed 6 tonnes of weapons-grade uranium into fuel for nuclear power plants. The country plans to process 12 tonnes this year and ultimately bring the annual amount to 30 tonnes, the minister said.

He said the summit might consider tightening control over the export to third countries of nuclear technologies that can be put to military use.

"We are taking a lot of care to prevent the export of dual-purpose nuclear technologies, and I can say that we have not sold any of them either to Iran or to any other country," Mikhaylov said. But he said Russia had no intention to go back on a contract to build a nuclear power plant in Bushehr, Iran.

He said the summit planned to consider the creation of regional international storage facilities for nuclear waste to replace national ones.

Russia: ICBM Launched at Plesetsk Test Range

LD1704135696 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1236 GMT 17 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Kipkeyev]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 17 Apr (Itar-Tass) — The first 1996 combat launching of the RS-12M Topol intercontinental ballistic missile [ICBM] was carried out today at 1100 [0700 GMT] during tactical exercises at the Plesetsk state test range. A training target in the Kamchatka area was successfully hit, Ilshat Baychurin, press center head of the Strategic Rocket Troops [SRT], told ITAR-TASS.

He said that SRT Commander in Chief Igor Sergeyev described as "excellent" the actions of the launching combat crew and praised its flawless training and professionalism; he also signed a decree commending the crew members.

The Topol intercontinental ballistic missile has been on alert duty for 12 years now. In the estimate of the SRT command, this launching has confirmed yet again the high combat readiness of the troops and the reliability of their weapons; it has also made it possible to extend the duration of use of rockets of this type.

The program of the development of strategic nuclear forces of the Russian Federation up to the year 2005 envisages that self-propelled launching installations with RS-12M Topol missiles will become a base unit of the SRT. The Topol is a unique system capable of launches not only from a special launching pad, but from any other point of its itinerary.

Federal Assembly

Russia: Duma Passes Law on Public Control Over Elections

LD1704125696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1008 GMT 17 Apr 96

[By Natalya Panshina]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 17 (ITAR-TASS) — The State Duma (Russian parliament lower house) adopted on Wednesday the federal bill "on public control over elections and openness when summing up results of voting" as a whole.

It establishes limits and forms of public control over holding elections of Russian president, deputies to the State Duma, bodies of state authority in subjects of the Russian Federation and of local self-government.

Observers have the right to be present at polling stations since the start of the work of election commissions. They may be present at the process of voting, counting of votes and inspect the contents of any protocols.

The most important provision of the law is recorded in Article 6 and provides for a possibility of holding a control counting of votes initially at two percent of polling stations in a constituency selected by drawing lots.

If differences of data of a control counting (at least at one of them) are such that they lead to a change in places taken by two or more candidates at a given station, the constituency commission takes a decision on holding a control counting at least at another five percent of polling stations.

If even this control counting corroborates violations, observers immediately take a decision on holding counting at all polling stations of a given constituency.

Russia: Duma Vetoes Extradition of Political Fugitives

LD1704180396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1715 GMT 17 Apr 96

[By Natalya Panshina]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 17 (ITAR-TASS) - The Russian State Duma (lower house of parliament) on Wednesday voted 436-0, with just one abstention, for a resolution demanding public prosecutor's actions to prevent extradition of people wanted at home for their political convictions.

The resolution had been forwarded by hardline deputy speaker Sergey Baburin in connection with recent arrests in Moscow of Azerbaijani former president Ayaz Mutalibov and defence minister Ragim Gaziyev, both wanted facing high treason charges in Baku.

Last weekend, Mutalibov was taken to custody by Russian police upon a request of Azerbaijan.

However on Wednesday, Russian Justice Minister Valentin Kovalev refused to disclose whether he would be extradited to Baku.

Kovalev told reporters that his position did not allow him to give any comments.

He only said that "there exists a theoretical possibility of extradition," but stressed that he was not speaking about Mutalibov.

The ex-Azerbaijani president, ousted in 1992, is wanted by Baku in connection with attempted coups in October of 1994 and March 1995 against current president Heydar Aliyev.

Mutalibov was rushed to hospital after the detention with a heart attack.

On Tuesday, Moscow extradited former Azerbaijani defence minister Ragim Gaziyev, who had been sentenced in absentia to death by the Supreme Court of Azerbaijan.

Russia: Duma Demands Taleban Release Air Crew

LD1704231196 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1518 GMT 17 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 17 April (ITAR-TASS) — The State Duma resolutely demands the immediate release of the crew members of a Russian Il-76 aircraft, which was seized last August by Taleban in Afghanistan in the vicinity of the town of Kandahar. Its demand is contained in a statement: "On the release of the Russian fliers being forcibly detained in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan," which was adopted by the chamber today.

Despite the good-will shown by Russia in meeting the demands of the Taleban movement's leadership and repeated promises by Taleban to release the Russian fliers, the citizens of Russia who were aboard the aircraft continue to be held in captivity as hostages, the document says.

In this connection the Duma called on the leadership of the Taleban movement to show humanity and goodwill and hand over the Russian crew members promptly to Russian Federation representatives. Further delays in releasing them on trumped up pretexts cannot be viewed other than as a display of unfriendliness toward Russia by Taleban and its patrons, the deputies consider. Such a line of action could have the gravest consequences and will definitely influence Russian policy toward Afghanistan, the statement stresses.

The Duma proposed that the president and Government of Russia make without delay the most energetic efforts and get the Russian fliers returned to their homeland. The Duma deputies also appealed to the leaders of Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United States; the parliamentarians of the world's countries and also the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Conference to do everything they can to achieve the prompt release of the Russian hostages in Kandahar.

Russia: Legislative, Regulatory Documents 7-13 Apr

96P50071A

[FBIS Report] The following is a listing of Russian legislation recently published in the press of the Russian Federation compiled by FBIS. Numbers within parens indicate approximate wordage. Entries followed by the notation Text have been translated into English and are available in FBIS publications.

SECTION I: ECONOMIC LEGISLATION (EXPORT-IMPORT, BANKING,

PRIVATIZATION, AUCTIONS, REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

Chernomyrdin-Signed 6 March Government Decree No. 256 Ratifying Statute On RF State Committee For Questions Of Development Of North, Accompanied By Aleksandr Sharov 'Commentary' Expressing Surprise At Absence Until Recently Of Federal Organ With Responsibility For Northern Affairs And Incorporating Interview On This And Related Issues With Committee Chairman Vladimir Kuramin. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 11 Apr 96 p 5) (1450)

Chernomyrdin Il March Directive No. 349 Relating To Loan To KMMAZ Auto Plant. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian lO Apr 96 p 6) (lOO)

Chernomyrdin 12 March Directive No. 362 Setting Up Commission To Check Efficiency With Which Moorages At Russian Black Sea Ports Are Being Utilized (As Part Of Measures Following Division Of Black Sea Fleet). (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian Il Apr 96 p 4) (300) (Text)

Chernomyrdin-Signed 21 March Government Decree No. 298 On Changes To Earlier Decree On Unified System For Compulsory Expert Appraisal Of Quantity, Quality, Price Of Exported Commodities. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian Il Apr 96 p 5) (450)

Chernomyrdin-Signed 21 March Government Decree No. 300 On Lapsing Of Certain Government Decisions Concerning Registration Of Commodity Export Contracts. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 9 Apr 96 p 5) (450)

Chernomyrdin 21 March Directive No. 412 Allocating Rl6.4 Billion From Reserve Fund For Measures On 10th Anniversary Of Chernobyl (Rl4.2 Billion Of This To Go To One-Shot Payments To Invalids And Families That Lost Breadwinners Because Of Accident). (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 10 Apr 96 p 6) (400)

Chernomyrdin-Signed 21 March Government Directive No. 414 On Emergency Funding For Tyva Republic In Wake Of January Accidents At Heat And Power Supply Facilities. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 9 Apr 96 p 1) (250)

Government 21 March Resolution No. 322 Amending 12 February Resolution No. 141 On Customs Union. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Apr 96 p 8) (150)

Chernomyrdin 23 March Directive No. 456 Giving Dagestan R26 Billion From Reserve Fund To Restore Highways In Kizlyar, Pervomayskoye, Sovetskoye, And Terechnoye (Damaged In Operations Against Chechen Forces Led By Raduyev). (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 10 Apr 96 p 6) (50)

Chernomyrdin 1 April Decree No. 356 On Partial Amendment To Rates Of Import Duties Approved By Government Decree No. 454 Of 6 May 1995, With Attached List Of Relevant Commodities And Rates Of Duty. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 11 Apr 96 p 5)

Yeltsin 1 April Edict No. 460 On Amendments To Statute On Russian Federation Archive Fund Approved By Edict No. 552 Of 17 March 1994. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 10 Apr 96 p 6) (100)

Yeltsin 1 April Edict No. 461 Invalidating Point 9 Of Edict No. 2116 Of 6 December 1993 On Ensuring Reliable Gas Supplies By 'Gazprom.' (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 11 Apr 96 p 4) (50)

Yeltsin 1 April Edict No. 464 On Amendments To Statute On Privatization (Free Transfer) Of Housing In Moscow Approved By Presidential Edict No. 16 Of 12 January 1992. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 10 Apr 96 p 6) (250)

Yeltsin-Signed 1 April Federal Law No. 25 On Amendments To RF Law On Value-Added Tax; With Commentary By Aleksandr Linkov. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 9 Apr 96 p 4) (3100/900)

Yeltsin-Signed 1 April Federal Law No. 27 On Individual (Personalized) Registration Within System Of State Pension Insurance. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 10 Apr 96 pp 4-5) (6000)

Chernomyrdin 3 April Decree No. 378 On Indexation Of Land Tax Rates In 1996 (Increases 1995 Rates By 50 Percent). (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 11 Apr 96 p 4) (150)

Yeltsin-Signed 3 April Federal Law No. 28 On Energy-Saving Measures. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 10 Apr 96 p 5) (2800)

Yeltsin-Signed 3 April Federal Law No. 29 On Financing Of Production Processes And Facilities Which Are Particularly Dangerous In Terms Of Radiation And Use Of Nuclear Materials. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 9 Apr 96 p 4) (800) (Text)

Yeltsin-Signed 8 April Edicts Nos. 493 And 494 On Measures To Restore Citizens' Savings And Measures To Ensure Prompt Payment Of Pensions. (Moscow

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 10 Apr 96 p 1) (250/150)

SECTION II: POLITICAL (INTERNATIONAL AND CIS AFFAIRS, ELECTIONS, CRIME, POLLUTION)

Chernomyrdin 28 February Decree No. 217 On Signing Of Agreement With Denmark On Constructing Housing For Persons Discharged From Military Service In Russian Armed Forces Withdrawn From Baltic Countries. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 10 Apr 96 p 6) (300)

Government 28 February Resolution No. 201 On Sharing Proceeds With Belarus From Sale Of Aircraft Scrapped At Bykhov Base. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Apr 96 p 8) (200)

Chernomyrdin 16 March Directive No. 393 Allocating Moscow Circus R251 Million To Fund Creation Of Training Workshop. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 11 Apr 96 p 4) (50)

Government 16 March Resolution No. 295 On Agreement With China On Cooperation On Inspecting Imported And Exported Goods. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Apr 96 p 8) (200)

Government 18 March Resolution No. 301 On Broadcasting Agreement With Georgia. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Apr 96 p 8) (200) (Text)

Government 18 March Resolution No. 302 On Economic Cooperation With Georgia For 1996-97. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Apr 96 p 8) (200) (Text)

Government 21 March Directive No. 427 Endorsing Plan For Russian, Georgian State Statistics Agencies To Hold Talks On Collaboration. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Apr 96 p 8) (50)

Government 21 March Resolution No. 303 On Joint Customs Service Command With Kyrgyzstan. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Apr 96 p 8) (200)

Government 21 March Resolution No. 318 On Economic Cooperation With Armenia For 1996-97. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Apr 96 p 8) (200) (Text)

Government 21 March Resolution No. 319 On Air Transport Links With Kyrgyzstan. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Apr 96 p 8) (200) And Agreement On Air Transport Links With Kyrgyzstan. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Apr 96 p 9) (6000)

Chernomyrdin-Signed 23 March Government Decree No. 327 On Approval And Submission For Presidential Ratification Of Main Provisions Of Regional Policy In Russian Federation. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 9 Apr 96 p 6) (100/5500) (Text)

Central Electoral Commission 25 March Decree No. 83 On Amendments To Memorandum On Activities Of Agents Of Presidential Candidates. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 10 Apr 96 p 6) (550)

Yeltsin 1 April Directive No. 155 Including Federation Council Member Ye.M. Larionova On President's Commission To Prepare Treaties On Demarcation Of Spheres Of Responsibility With Federation Components. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 10 Apr 96 p 6) (50)

Yeltsin-Signed 1 April Edict No. 440 On Approving Government-Submitted Concept For Russian Federation's Transition To Stable Development In Context Of Recommendations And Principles Set Forth In Documents Of UN Conference On Environment And Development Held In Rio De Janeiro In 1992, Accompanied By Text Of 'Concept...' (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 9 Apr 96 p 5) (150/3900)

Chernomyrdin 2 April Decree No. 389 On Preparation And Holding Of First World Festival And Competition Of Circus Arts. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 11 Apr 96 p 4) (600)

Chernomyrdin 3 April Decree No. 387 On Additional Measures To Support Young People In Russian Federation. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 11 Apr 96 p 4) (800)

Central Electoral Commission 3 April Decree No. 85 Formally Registering Yeltsin As Presidential Candidate. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 10 Apr 96 p 6) (300)

Yeltsin-Signed 4 April Directive No. 161 Approving Composition Of State Commission For Settlement Of Chechnya Crisis, Accompanied By List Of Commission Members. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 10 Apr 96 p 1) (350) (Text)

Central Electoral Commission 5 April Decree No. 86 Formally Registering LDPR Leader Zhirinovskiy As Presidential Candidate. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 11 Apr 96 p 4) (200)

SECTION III: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Chernomyrdin 3 April Decree No. 391 On Procedure For Granting Benefits To Personnel Exposed To Risk Of HIV Infection In The Line Of Duty. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 11 Apr 96 p 4) (550) (Text)

Regional Affairs

Russia: Dudayev May Meet With Yeltsin Representative

LD1704135096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1230 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, April 17 (Interfax) — Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev may meet with a representative of Russian President Boris Yeltsin this week to discuss Yeltsin's peace plan, a Chechen government official said.

Dudayev "plans to be in Shali in the near future, having long ago wanted to turn it into the capital of the Chechen republic of Ichkeria," the official said. "Then, some reports say, Dudayev plans to head off for the village of Khankala, near Groznyy," the Chechen capital, where the federal troops have their headquarters, and where Dudayev may meet with Yeltsin's representative.

This could be Nationalities Minister Vyacheslav Mikhaylov, who is currently accompanying Yeltsin on his visit to the Stavropol territory in southern Russia, and plans to go to Chechnya immediately afterwards, the official said.

"Mikhaylov has lots of experience in dealing with Dudayev, going back to last summer," he said.

A Nationalities Ministry spokesman confirmed that Mikhaylov will be going to Groznyy after the Stavropol trip, where he will hold a number of consultations. The spokesman said Mikhaylov may also meet with influential representatives of Dudayev.

Emil Pain, a member of the President's Council who was on the government commission for settlement of the Chechen conflict, may soon also join the talks, a Russian government official said. Pain plans to fly out to Grozlny Thursday morning, he said.

A federal troop representative told Interfax that "a hypothetical visit of Dudayev to headquarters could occur under the current circumstances," but "preliminary arrangements need to be made."

Russia: Mikhaylov, Pain Seen as Good Choice in Chechen Peace Talks

MK1804111696 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 18 Apr 96 p 3

[Report by Dmitriy Kamyshev: "Moscow Getting Ready For Second Attempt"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Despite continuing clashes in various areas of Chechnya, the prospects of reopening a dialogue between Moscow and Dudayev supporters are taking an increasingly definite shape. In the view of informed sources, those to be tasked with restoring contacts with the Dudayevites are Minister for Nationalities Affairs Vyacheslav Mikhaylov, who is going to Groznyy soon, and Emil Pain, who is leaving for the Chechen capital today.

The official objective of Vyacheslav Mikhaylov's trip to Groznyy is to hold consultations on a peaceful settlement of the Chechen conflict. But inasmuch as the minister, who led the government delegation at the previous talks with Dudayev supporters, enjoys a measure of their confidence, the guess of many experts that Mikhaylov will try to get in touch with Dudayevites as well appears to be well-grounded. According to INTERFAKS, Emil Pain, member of the presidential council, who also thought to be a good choice as truce envoy, may very well keep him company. Not only does Pain take professional interest in interethnic relations in general and in Chechnya in particular (he heads the working group to draft a plan for amicable settlement of the Chechen conflict) but, for the Dudayevites, he is also a relatively new figure, unconnected with Moscow's previous mistakes.

The resumption of the dialogue may be slowed down because the federal authorities have no specific negotiating plan. The State Commission on Chechnya settlement has failed to approve this plan, as KOMMERSANT-DAILY has reported. Judging by the fact that the commission has decided to agree in advance on the "structure of the negotiating process" with corresponding ministries and departments, this time around Moscow is preparing to start a peace dialogue in a much more serious way than last June. At any rate, agreeing on the negotiating plan in advance is supposed to help avoid a situation which was usual during previous talks, where officials of various ministries in Chechnya were talking and acting as they saw fit and infrequently contradicted each other.

The men in Groznyy are the most optimistic about the future talks. According to an INTERFAKS source in Chechnya's government circles, even Dudayev himself may attend the meeting with Russian representatives at the headquarters of the joint grouping in Khankala. In the light of yesterday's utterances of Justice Minister Valentin Kovalev, who hinted that there is a possibility to clear the Chechen leader of criminal charges "depending on the situation at the talks," this could appear as a probability. At the same time, however, Kovalev advised to Dudayev to make "a very strong move" by voluntarily appearing before a Russian court and proving his case. Considering the general's dislike of Russian law-enforcement agencies, this piece of advice is unlikely to rouse him to personal participation in talks on a territory controlled by federal forces.

However, Dudayev does not seem to have decided what form of talks with Moscow he needs more. Whereas ten days ago he argued he would do without "maharajahs from overseas" in the peace dialogue, he is now with the same conviction asking the president of Turkey and the king of Jordan to become mediators. The only thing that remains unchanged is the general's lasting conviction that by demonstrating his power ahead of the talks he is speeding the settlement process. Yet another evidence of this was yesterday's fighters' attack against a column of federal troops outside Shatoy, where the latter lost 26 men dead and 51 wounded. It is absolutely obvious, however, that far from making Moscow more compliant such actions would provide Russian generals, who hate to stop the rather successful offensive half way through, with a new pretext to press on with it.

Russia: Sobchak Initiative on Chechnya Seen as Potentially Useful

MM1804112896 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 18 Apr 96 p 2

[Article by Vyacheslav Goncharov: "A. Sobchak's Proposal Has a Point"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Many people are currently observing with hope the peacemaking efforts of [Tatarstan President] M. Shaymiyev, who has taken on himself the role of mediator in talks with Chechen separatist leader Dudayev. Will they take place? How will they end? And when will peace and calm finally come to long-suffering Chechnya?

These questions are currently exercising not only politicians and military men but also thousands of families with sons serving in the Russian Army. Chechen shells and mines carry their consequences to the furthest parts of Russia in the form of burials and reports of injuries, breaking the hearts of mothers and fathers. This is why there has been a reaction of hope to St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak's initiative. At a 10 April news conference in Moscow he suggested the city on the Neva as the venue for talks with all Chechnya's political forces. And he stated that he is himself prepared to play the role of mediator. If such a proposal is put to him.

As has become known from circles close to the State Commission for the Settlement of the Chechen Crisis, the St. Petersburg mayor's statement is assessed there as "apt." Many analysts think that "the Palmyra of the North" is indeed completely acceptable as a venue for possible talks. Against the backdrop of disruption caused by the reforms St. Petersburg has remained an island of stability and civil accord all these years. As for possible mediation services by A. Sobchak, observers believe that the city leader falls objectively into the category of mediators acceptable to both Moscow and Dudayev. The potential of A. Sobchak's peacemaking efforts could be considerably increased by his alliance with M. Shaymiyev, who undoubtedly possesses great authority for both the Russian and the Chechen sides. Here State Commission circles stress that the two politicians could form an effective duo. Since A. Sobchak is not seeking to steal anybody else's thunder in terms of mediation services. He is merely offering his city as a venue for talks.

Incidentally, it is being noted in the political establishment that this new Chechnya initiative comes from a democratic politician who enjoys an international reputation, does not cause an allergic reaction on the part of the federal center, and does not scare off Dudayev either. Many people have drawn attention to A. Sobchak's comment that topics for discussion could include both the plan proposed by the president for settling the conflict in Chechnya and also others submitted by the parties themselves. And this fits in with the powers which B. Yeltsin has granted to this state organ.

In any event, analysts believe, some kind of participation by A. Sobchak in mediation would give a positive boost to the negotiating process. This is especially important since accusations that it was reformers who unleashed the war in Chechnya are being made increasingly frequently in the current election struggle.

Russia: Moscow Air Defense Chief Kornukov Interviewed

MM1704160496 Moscow TRUD in Russian 13 Apr 96 p 2

[Interview with Colonel General Anatoliy Kornukov, commander of Moscow Air Defense District, by Colonel Samail Temirbiyev; date and place not given: "Tomorrow Is Air Defense Day. 'Umbrella' Over Moscow"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On the eve of the holiday our correspondent met with Colonel General Anatoliy Kornukov, commander of the Moscow Air Defense District.

[Kornukov] We do not only defend Moscow. Our air borders are 4,400 km long. The district covers 25 oblasts and republics of the Russian Federation. Units and large combined units have state-of-the-art missile-carrying aircraft (MiG-31's and Su-27's) and various models of antiaircraft rocket launcher (S-300's) in their arsenal. They have not only demonstrated their effectiveness and reliability at airshows and exhibitions in Le Bourget and Abu Dhabi but also during target practice and live firing at test sites. Every day there are 108 subunits of radiotechnical and antiaircraft missile troops and 10 fighter-intercept crews on combat alert and around 2,000 men defending the capital's skies.

[Temirbiyev] The district's zone of responsibility contains 20 percent of Russia's industrial potential, around 30 percent of its population, eight nuclear electric power stations, and 140 installations of state administration and military command and control. How could all this tie in with the decision to effectively disband the district?

[Kornukov] That question was indeed raised a year ago. However, thanks to the timely intervention of Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov, the city's public, and articles in the central and Moscow newspapers the district managed to survive. But that does not of course mean that we do not have difficulties. Underfunding, for instance. In order to survive the district needs 1.300 trillion rubles [R] per year. That is money for wages, fuel and lubricants, utilities, combat alert duty, and combat training. We have around 700 camps and garrisons alone, several military hospitals and clinics, dozens of kindergartens, creches, and children's health camps.... Yet we received R470 billion. Just think.

[Temirbiyev] Anatoliy Mikhaylovich, of late a great deal has been said and written about unidentified aircraft that supposedly got into Chechnya through "gaps" in our air defense system in the Caucasus and bombed population centers there. Is that possible?

[Kornukov] You are not really asking the right person, but I will give you an answer. No, I am sure that this is impossible. But I would add that it is not that important whether the area was bombed or whether artillery was in operation. This war must be ended — that is the main thing.

Russia: Duma Deputy Borovoy Comments on Talks With Dudayev

964F1787A Moscow ARGUMENTY I FAKTY in Russian Apr 96 No 15, p 6

[Interview with Konstantin Borovoy, deputy of the Russian Federation State Duma, by Dmitriy Makarov; place and date not given: "Dudayev's Position"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A person with his finger on the pulse of the Chechen war is Konstantin Borovoy, deputy of the Russian Federation State Duma. He has traveled to Chechnya many times and is in constant telephone contact with Dudayev. ARGUMENTY I FAKTY correspondent Dmitriy Makarov interviews K. Borovoy on the Chechen leader's position in regard to Yeltsin's peace plan.

[Makarov] When did you last speak with Dudayev?

[Borovoy] In the early hours of 7 April. It was a long conversation. First Dudayev made a statement about the situation in Russia and the obstacles in Russia to a peaceful resolution of the conflict and on the people not interested in peace.

[Makarov] Who are they?

[Borovoy] Dudayev employed the just about archaic term red- browns. This was a statement in defense of Yeltsin, as it were. Dudayev, generally speaking, holds pro-Yeltsin positions.

[Makarov] That's strange. Quite recently even he was saying, seemingly, that he could negotiate only with the Communists.

[Borovoy] To the extent that I know him, there simply could not have been such statements. In the course of our last conversation Dudayev said that Russia did not completely have a state based on the rule of law as yet. The property and rights and liberties of the citizens are not protected as yet, and the power structures stepping out of line and every possible form of discredit of the president have for this reason become a customary occurrence. He should, therefore, take urgent action to rescue his authority.

[Makarov] Such as?

[Borovoy] He should for this replace many people in his team. Anticipating the possibility of the advent of the reds, they are playing on two fronts. "Yeltsin," Dudayev said, "should undertake a purge of his entourage." Chechnya has no aircraft in Azerbaijan or Turkey. These aircraft are made ready in Russia, in Moscow Oblast's Mytishchi. Pseudo-Dudayev fighters are being trained also. He declared also that the mechanism of the attempted assassinations of Lobov, Romanov, and Dudayev himself is of an identical nature.

[Makarov] Russia's special services, that is?

[Borovoy] He did not say so in as many words. But it was clear from the hint that it is a question of special services and Zavgayev.

[Makarov] How can the Chechen problem be resolved, in Dudayev's opinion?

[Borovoy] Everything could be resolved in half an hour of direct negotiations without mediators. But he is prepared to conduct negotiations with a representative of Yeltsin also on three conditions:

1. If this person is authorized by Yeltsin himself. 2. If he truly wants negotiations and is not pretending. 3. If Dudayev is convinced that this person will not betray Yeltsin.

Dudayev went on to say that no "overseas maharajahs" are needed in these negotiations. This was his response to the idea of the enlistment of foreigners in the negotiations.

[Makarov] How adequate is the perception of the figure of Dudayev in Russia?

[Borovoy] Entirely inadequate. Consciously or not, attempts are being made to emphasize Dudayev's Mohammedanism. In actual fact, he is a normal Soviet general educated in a Soviet school, college, and academy. Dudayev is not the least bit different in mentality from his enemies. Yes, he respects the laws of his people, Islamic included, but Soviet laws are still closer to him.

[Makarov] Whom does Dudayev see as a mediator in negotiations between himself and Yeltsin?

[Borovoy] He would not object to the candidacy of Yavlinskiy if the latter were to be empowered by the president. In addition, Dudayev said that the participation of General Gromov as military adviser would be extremely desirable inasmuch as the latter is a top-class specialist. Gromov was Dudayev's immediate superior in Afghanistan.

[Makarov] But Yeltsin has proposed Shaymiyev.

[Borovoy] Dudayev does not object to the mediation of Shaymiyev, he demands only additional guarantees of his authority.

[Makarov] Does it not seem to you that Shaymiyev's job should be to explain to the amateur Dudayev on which side his bread is buttered? Tatarstan enjoys practically total sovereignty while remaining a part of Russia.

[Borovoy] Mediation would be a very good step for Shaymiyev. It would help people forget that, contrary to the Russian Constitution, Shaymiyev was elected on an uncontested basis.

But for Russia the consequences of Shaymiyev's participation in the negotiations could be deplorable. This would strengthen the trend toward separatism even more. For after some accords had been achieved, Shaymiyev would inevitably be "exposed" by the military, and Shaymiyev and the Tatarstanis would perceive this as an insult.

[Makarov] What is your personal forecast concerning the development of events in Chechnya?

[Borovoy] Yeltsin has offered a plan for a settlement. The military is not observing it particularly, and perhaps it is not being compelled to observe it.

Nonetheless, Dudayev says that he accepts the Yeltsin plan. A very noble gesture, if only because on Sunday, when I was talking with him, bombing was under way, and it was audible even on the telephone.

[Makarov] Can Yeltsin bring the war to an end, in your opinion?

[Borovoy] Yes, he could do so, but in ending the war Yeltsin would win the civil electorate, but lose the Army because it would feel itself the loser once again. And with so unreliable a minister as Grachev this would be very dangerous. Yeltsin understands that he cannot go on reconnaissance with him. But, on the other hand, he is afraid to dismiss him on the eve of the elections. Consequently, the present situation of no war, no peace is the sole possible one for Yeltsin. This situation could continue as long as he likes, but this is very dangerous. The electorate will begin to run away from a president and presidential candidate who is not in control of the situation. For example, it is rumored that Nikolay Yegorov is having contacts with the Communists. He is already afraid to support Yeltsin. Through contacts with the Communists, Yeltsin's entourage is attempting to obtain assurances that what they have managed to acquire will not be taken away from them.

Russia: Airtime Allocated in St. Petersburg Gubernatorial Campaign

LD1704175596 St. Petersburg Fifth Channel Television Network in Russian 1555 GMT 16 Apr 96

[From the "Inform-TV" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] The elections remain the main news of the hour. The management of our television and radio company has proposed to the St. Petersburg city electoral committee a timetable for granting airtime to the candidates for the post of governor.

At the first stage of the pre-election campaign from 5-15 May, the candidates will address the electorate from 1100 until 1300 and from 2100 until 2300.

Every candidate will have the right to have two slots each, 22 and one-half minutes long in the morning and in the evening.

The time and date will be determined by a lottery.

On 16 and 17 May all candidates will receive 10 minutes between 2000 and 2320 for a statement.

Seventeen candidates will be able to appear every day.

The letter to the chairman of the central electoral commission stresses in particular that as a consequence of its federal status, the St. Petersburg 5th channel All-Russia State Radio and Television Company cannot regard the St. Petersburg law on the election of the head of executive power as a document of a directive nature.

Let us remind you that the law adopted by the city parliament outlines the framework for television appearances by candidates from 2000 to 2300 and on radio from 0700 to 2000.

Russia: Mayor Sobchak Comments on Upcoming St. Petersburg Election

MM1804083996 Moscow TRUD in Russian 16 Apr 96 p 2

[Interview with St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak by Olga Solomonova; date and place not given: "I Am My Most Dangerous Rival"]

[FBIS Translated Text] An interview with Yuriy Boldyrev, deputy chairman of the Russian Federation Comptroller's Office, whom the St. Petersburg Electoral Commission refused to register as a candidate for the post of city governor, was published in our newspaper under the "Scandal" rubric 6 April. The justification given for the refusal was an amendment to the law on elections introduced by local legislators, which required all candidates to have lived in the city for a minimum of 12 months before the elections. The City Court subsequently overruled the electoral commission's decision.

The current mayor of the "Palmyra of the north" talked about this situation, and also about the St. Petersburg governor elections scheduled for 19 May.

[Solomonova] Anatoliy Aleksandrovich, could you comment on the introduction of a residence qualification for city governor candidates? Not only Boldyrev, but 92 State Duma deputies have lodged an inquiry with the Constitutional Court, believing this amendment to be discriminatory....

[Sobchak] In my view, our legislation allows the introduction of such a requirement. A residence qualification is not in breach of the Constitution. Yes, the amendment stipulates that a candidate must have lived in St. Petersburg for a minimum of 12 months before the governor elections. You must agree, it would be strange if he were simply required to have lived in the city for a year in his early childhood, for example. There would be no end of new arrivals eager to "take the helm" in St. Petersburg.

[Solomonova] But Yuriy Boldyrev feels the amendment is being used to eliminate your most dangerous rivals. He could be just such a rival for you: After all, he is well known in Russia, having been elected to both Soviet and Russian representative bodies.

[Sobchak] First, I personally opposed the amendment, which is how the whole thing began. Second, Boldyrev is a very convenient rival for me to have. If you look closely at Yuriy Yuryevich's career, you will see that he has not done anything constructive in his time. The only thing he has ever done is check up on everyone else. He is probably not a bad comptroller. But I would not describe Boldyrev as a serious rival. Aleksandr Belyayev is streets ahead of him....

[Solomonova] How do you explain the fact that the elections in St. Petersburg are going to be held before the elections of the Russian president and the Moscow mayor?

[Sobchak] Initially, our city mayor elections were scheduled for 16 June. But Boris Nikolayevich said during one of our meetings that the presidential election must not coincide with any other elections, as it would divert the city leadership's resources from the nationwide election campaign. I agreed, but said that no exception should be made for Moscow. The long-standing rivalry between our two cities could play a negative role in this instance: The people of St. Petersburg might interpret the change of election date as discrimination. After all, I said to Yeltsin, our city has always supported you. Later we were still debating when it would be best to hold the elections. We opted for 19 May. This suits me, because the most important thing, in my view, is actually to ensure that St. Petersburg has a legitimate city leader by 16 June. This will guarantee it the level of freedom defined by the Constitution.

[Solomonova] What if a Communist becomes governor of the city?

[Sobchak] No, under no circumstances will St. Petersburg turn red. The communist electorate represents a maximum of 12 percent here. That is not enough to win.

[Solomonova] So who is your most serious rival?

[Sobchak] I am. Because everything good and everything bad that has been done in the last five years has been up to me. I do not disown any of it. Let the people of St. Petersburg decide.

Russia: Yeltsin Approves Sverdlovsk Oblast Investment Tax Credit

MM1804084896 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Apr 96 p 4

[Russian Federation president's edict No. 510, dated Moscow, the Kremlin, 9 April 1996 and signed by Russian Federation President B. Yeltsin: "On Granting Investment Tax Credit to Sverdlovsk Oblast Enterprises in Defense Sectors of Industry," — from the "Documents" section]

[FBIS Translated Text] For the purposes of giving investment support, accelerating the implementation of measures for the reorientation of the military production of Sverdlovsk Oblast enterprises in defense sectors of industry to production of civilian output, and creating conditions for the stabilization of their socioeconomic position, I decree:

1. The Russian Federation Government's proposal, agreed with the government of Sverdlovsk Oblast, to grant a five-year investment tax credit of 74 billion rubles to enterprises in defense sectors of industry against a guarantee from the oblast administration in respect of the profits tax earmarked for transfer to the federal budget, is accepted.

It is prescribed that compensation for the federal budget's falling revenues associated with the granting of the said investment tax credit is given by means of reducing expenditure on the funding on a repayable basis of the investment programs for defense industry conversion provided for in Article 18 of the Federal Law "On the Federal Budget for 1996."

2. This edict comes into force the day it is signed.

[Signed] B. Yeltsin, president of the Russian Federation
[Dated] Moscow, the Kremlin, 9 April 1996

Russia: Kaliningrad Gubernatorial, Duma Elections Postponed

MK1804111796 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 17 Apr 96 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Kaliningrad Deputies Have Taken President's Advice"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Kaliningrad Oblast Duma made a decision to postpone the elections of the governor and the oblast parliament, scheduled for 16 June, to 6 October 1996. Making such a request to the Duma, Oblast Governor Yuriy Matochkin said that he was forced to take into consideration the president's insistent advice. The decision made by the deputies has also probably been influenced by the fact that the funding of the region from the federal budget has lately diminished and that the law on a special economic zone — on which the oblast pins great hope — has not come into force yet. Meanwhile, on the eve of the session, the "Amber Region of Russia" [Yantarnyy kray Rossii] bloc, supporting the governor, made a statement saying that it was ready to contest the decision to postpone the election in court, since the powers of the oblast parliament expired as long ago as 27 March.

Economic Issues

Russia: Official: New Economic Framework, But Instability Remains

LD1804121296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1134 GMT 18 Apr 96

[By Alena Gubanova, Sergei Trofimov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ASTRAKHAN, April 18 (ITAR-TASS) — Thanks to an increase in foreign trade turnover, stronger rouble and slower recession rates, Russia acquired "a new economic framework", but the economy still remains unstable, according to First Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Kadannikov, who spoke to representatives of 11 heartland regions in Astrakhan on Thursday.

"Even the sceptics admit the improvements" in the Russian economy, he told a conference of the Big Volga Association which was also attended by officials from neighbouring Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan.

Kadannikov said that the current situation warrants an inflow of investments into production from financial markets and estimated that the monthly inflation would not exceed 3 percent in May-June and was expected to drop to 1.5 or 2 percent by the end of 1996.

However, "despite the positive tendency, the economy of Russia remains in an unstable state in general", Kadannikov said adding that the stabilisation heavily depends on Russia's regions.

"The Russian government attaches great importance to building new relations with the regions", the deputy prime minister said and added that the government would support those provinces which have feasible economic projects.

Kadannikov also said that the state would transfer a part of its shares in federal companies to the provinces.

The conference is also to discuss problems of the Volga river basin, as well as a social and economic development concept for the region.

Russia: Economic Minister Questions Slowdown in Privatization

LD1704194296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1904 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 17 (INTERFAX) - The virtual suspension of privatization in Russia is discouraging, Russian Economics Minister Yevgeniy Yasin told Interfax Wednesday.

The shares-for-loans auctions are far from the best privatization technique, he said. "Under other circumstances, we had better avoid them," he said.

The very fact of suspending the auctions to revise their results will affect the investment climate in Russia, he said.

"I am suspicious about what is being done with privatization," Yasin said.

At the same time, he agreed with State Property Committee Chairman Aleksandr Kazakov that privatization for money should be calmer and slower than that for certificates. However, Yasin was negative about "the ongoing latent freezing of state-owned stakes."

Russia: New Privatization Edict Targets Defense Industry Votes

MK1704122796 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 17 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Natalya Samoylova: "A Strong Military Industrial Complex, a Strong President"]

[FBIS Translated Text] After six months of preparations Boris Yeltsin has signed an edict, "On Measures To Ensure an Effective State Control of the Privatization of Enterprises and Organizations in the Defense Complex." The edict calls for the creation of a federal commission to oversee the administration and privatization of installations, enterprises, and organizations in the defense sector. Like nearly all preceding Kremlin documents, the "defense sector" edict fits into the Russian president's preelection strategy: Now he has begun to fight for the votes of the military industrial complex.

The edict might have roamed the corridors of power for a long time yet were it not for the presidential elections. The incessant prophecies about the collapse of the national defense industry, which negatively tell on the president's electoral image, called for his urgent intervention. The federal commission to oversee the management and privatization of installations, enterprises, and organizations in the defense complex is headed by First Deputy Premier Oleg Soskovets, who will bear personal responsibility for the decisions made by his commission. Assuming that the commission's broad powers are, in effect realized, it can be suggested that time-tested interdepartmental commissions like the Military Industrial Commission of the USSR Council of Ministers are coming back into practice in the state administration.

The commission's personal composition leaves no room to doubt its clout: As of now top officials from virtually all ministries and departments will supervise the "transformation of the forms of ownership in the process of privatizing defense complex enterprises and organizations in order to prevent damage from being caused to national security." This collegial work will begin with a drawing up of lists of strategic objects not subject to privatization. All strategic decisions and a mechanism for their implementation will be approved by commission members, comprising 21 state officials and two [Duma] deputies, by a majority vote, in open ballot. This innovation in the administration of a particular branch will certainly not weaken interdepartmental contradictions: Behind-the-scenes games will still be paramount in this process. The only thing that will definitely produce a positive result is the direct responsibility of the commission members and its head for the consequences of the decisions made. The principle of coordinating decisions bearing on defense enterprises (or the administration of the military industrial complex in general) between the ministries, which existed in the past, helped them to successfully uphold their narrow departmental and even personal interests.

It is noteworthy that almost simultaneously with the creation of the federal "defense" commission a decision is pending on the reorganization of the State Commission for the Defense Sectors of Industry as a full-fledged ministry, Oleg Soskovets said yesterday. He believes that the role of the defense industry is key to reform in the country. The thesis: "a strong military industrial complex — a strong country" is becoming increasingly popular in governmental circles, and this is hardly linked directly with the presidential elections, even though the promotion of the national security idea can add votes to Boris Yeltsin.

Russia: CPRF Economic Platform Seen Promising Return to Past

MK1704124396 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 17 Apr 96 pp 1-2

[Report by 'Clinical Tests Sector': "To Copulate and To Starve. The Reds Want To Break Up the Market and To Increase the Head Count of Beggars"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Reform has been under way for merely five years now, but Russia has already changed beyond recognition. God alone knows what it might be in ten years' time. God and the Communist parliamentarians, that is, who have already drawn up at least two "forward-looking" plans for the development of Russia after their victory in the presidential election.

The first plan or, to be more precise, the "Concept of Economic and Social Development of the Russian Federation From 1996 to the Year 2000," was drawn up by the State Duma's Economic Policy Committee under its chairman Yuriy Maslyukov, who used to hold the post of head of the USSR State Planning Committee [Gosplan].

The second document, the bill "On Emergency Measures To Lift Russia Out of Crisis and To Ensure the Socioeconomic Development of the Country," was brought to life in the entrails of the Duma's CPRF faction under the aegis of Messrs. Bratishchev, Martemyanov, and Co.

In principle, both plans are more or less similar. Both options boil down to the following:

First, the resuscitation of Gosplan, which will manage all the economic processes in the country on behalf of the state.

Second, the restoration of the former banking system, in which all financial flow will be fully controlled by the Central Bank and the specialized state banks subordinated to it. The Russian Savings Bank [Sberbank] will once again become state-owned and will be given the exclusive right to carry out currency operations and to distribute loans to finance specific projects.

Third, the introduction of regulated prices (wholesale, retail, purchase prices) for all key industrial and agricultural commodities and fixed transport fees.

Further, there is nationalization, which is planned to be carried out "by nonviolent methods"; the closure of borders by imposing exorbitant import duties; an increase in the tax on "exchange and bank speculation," real estate transactions, and other types of commercial activities that are "nonproductive in nature."

In short, "a peaceful elimination" of the private sector and a switch to the central planning of the economy.

Under the plan, the Communists want to give a boost to agriculture and heavy industry, to finance social programs, and to raise the birth rate.

For those who will stop using contraceptives and will give birth to new soldiers, workers, and engineers for the benefit of the country, the socialist Motherland will do whatever it can; namely, it will promise them housing, extra bread coupons, and cheap public transport tickets. For those who do not want to toe the line.... criminal legal action for abortions.

In a word, the Communists will go to any length to increase the head count of poverty-stricken sheep that they will subsequently begin to shear for wool.

Understandably, for this to be done they will need initial investment, but the Red economists are hoping to get the money without particular difficulty.

First, by monopolizing exports: Oil, gas, and other raw materials alone are due to replenish the treasury annually by $30-40 billion — the IMF with its pathetic handouts cannot hold a candle to the Communists!

Second, by "expropriating the expropriators": If the moneybags are shaken thoroughly, about $10-20 billion can be obtained easily and at once — most important is to prevent those who have money from bolting to foreign countries!

Third, the main source of any revolution is the people, who will once again have to part with their savings in dollars and rubles and with real estate. The myth of universal poverty can be kept alive for some time, of course, but the fact remains that last year Russian citizens deposited 46 trillion rubles and bought 134-trillion-rubles worth of hard currency at the Sberbank alone. Just do what Abalkin advises — and voila!

No banks excepting the Sberbank will be allowed to accept currency deposits. There [at the Sberbank] a currency account will be opened for everyone. As soon as the customer wants to recover his money, he will be able to exchange his dollars at the current exchange rate. But at street exchange offices he will only be able to do so at a special rate that will be twice as low. So those who have kept their cash at home will lose one-half of their savings unless they agree to cooperate with the state.

The reasoning goes as follows: Our people are like children, they do not know themselves what they want!

Yet, had the state been able to spend the money it seizes from its citizens with maximum efficiency, the Communist order would long ago have spread throughout Europe and, maybe, reached Japan and America. But the socialist method of production has not brought any country anything but across-the-board shortages, hunger, and poverty.

The new architects of the "bright future" have perfectly fitting practical experience in that regard. Comrade Maslyukov, being personally in charge of Gosplan, had planned such a mess out of the national economy that he can confidently consider himself to be a forerunner of perestroyka. Comrade Abalkin, being the main economic think tank of the Gorbachev-Ryzhkov team, had within one year or two successfully reduced the entire country to food coupons and rations, thus, for his part, paving the way to power for Yeltsin.

Now all these veterans of economic chaos are trying to conduct yet another experiment with the country. The most ridiculous thing is that no one has attempted to prevent them from doing so.

Russia: Government To Discuss Substandard Imports

MM1804103596 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 Apr 96 pp 1-2

[Report by Sergey Taranov and Yelena Yakovleva: "Government Sets About Sausage in Earnest. It Plans To Step Up Control Over Imports. But Will the Food Market Not Be Depleted as a Result?"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] On 18 April one of the main points of the government session will be the question of protecting Russia's consumer market from substandard imports.

Before discussion in the White House the question of "bad" imports was worked out in eight Russian ministries and departments - - from the Foreign Ministry to the Ministry of the Economy. When you read their conclusions you can sense a rare unanimity on the main point: Poisonous food and drink from abroad and fake and just as dangerous consumer goods have affected Russians to such an extent that there is nowhere further to go, as the saying goes: Will they suddenly poison us? [passage omitted]

The common opinion was that most often poor goods come from Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, and Tajikistan but also from China, Turkey, Poland, and Germany.

Citing the reasons for the chaos which is occurring and those to blame for it, various ministries and departments unanimously note the objective circumstances favoring the penetration of substandard and fake imports into Russia. [passage omitted]

In the opinion of the persons concerned, despite the complexity and multifaceted nature of the imports problem it can and must be solved — primarily at the level of the Russian Government and not only of individual ministries. Among the dozens of possible measures for protecting the Russian market we note the following:

— the guarantor of output's quality should be its producer, who confirms this by his statement or a certificate from the exporting country (such documents are possible now but... not compulsory);

— legislation regulating the procedure for bringing imports into Russia should be changed and made tougher;

— economic sanctions and criminal liability should be introduced against firms and individuals who import substandard goods into Russia;

— centers for the certification and testing of goods should be developed;

— the personal responsibility of inspectors and controllers working, as a rule, in crime-run markets, should be stepped up.

— Russia's borders should be guarded and smuggling halted.

It looks as though the government is ready to wage war against the import of food harmful to Russian stomachs. [passage omitted]

But common sense and a knowledge of our own history makes us think of the indirect aims of the good intentions and measures which are being proclaimed by the authorities. The experience is still fresh of the Soviet-era administrative leaders' active use of sanitary, veterinary, and other oversight to interfere in free trade flows. In the seventies it was the movement of citrus fruit from the Caucasus, at the time of perestroyka it was the movement of "live-weight" meat from Russia's southern oblasts to the Caucasus and today it could be the movement of food imported into Russia.

Recently the close attention paid to it (let us recall the recent "chicken legs war" between Russian and America) makes us think of the entirely possible protectionist hidden agenda to the government's concern to protect the Russian consumer from substandard imports.

But as protectionist measures these usually do not work. The wholesale price for chicken meat from Russian poultry factories is lower than the price for "Bush's chicken legs" and consequently competition is developing not over price but over quality. And so far "Bush's chicken legs" are winning. Which, incidentally, was confirmed by the opinions of American drumsticks at the Tushinskiy wholesale market. When he heard this our colleague from the United States Lusian Perkino [name as transliterated] experienced an entirely legitimate pride....

Russia: Gas Supplies to Poland To Increase

LD1804090696 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1623 GMT 17 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Igor Ivantsov]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Moscow, 17 April (ITAR-TASS) — Russia will increase the supply of natural gas to Poland to 14 billion cubic meters a year, Rem Vyakhirev, chairman of the board of the Russian company "Gazprom," told a briefing today. He had attended a meeting of the supervision council of the Russian-Polish enterprise "EuropPolGas" held in Moscow today.

He said that Russian gas will be supplied via the Yamal-Europe gas pipeline currently under construction. It will pass through Poland. Its annual capacity will exceed 60 billion cubic meters of gas. [passage omitted]

International Affairs

Ukraine: OSCE Weapons Inspection Group Arrives in Crimea

LD1704205996 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1630 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sevastopol [no date as received] — Representatives from one of the verification centers in Frankfurt am Main (Germany), set up to monitor the implementation of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE] treaty on reducing conventional offensive weapons in Europe, arrived in Crimea on 17 April, a UNIAN correspondent reports.

At a briefing in Sevastopol held by the representatives of the verification center, U.S. Army Colonel James Jubilee, the head of the inspection group, said that the aim of the visit was to check the weapons of a marine infantry brigade and an antiaircraft missile regiment of the Black Sea Fleet.

A representative of the Black Sea Fleet staff headquarters gave assurances at a news conference that all the necessary conditions would be made available to the inspectors in order to facilitate their work in the fleet's units.

Ukraine: Russia Refuses To Hand Over BSF Ships to Ukrainian Navy

LD1704180796 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1600 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — The Russian Federation has refused to transfer to the Ukrainian Navy 54 ships from the Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol as stipulated in the agreements on the so-called second stage of the division of the fleet, which had been reached by the ministers of defence of Ukraine and the Russian Federation, Valeriy Shmarov and Pavel Grachev, during their negotiations in Tisovets in Lvov region. The ministers decided to continue with the purely technical division of the fleet and to leave the issue of the status and subordination of the naval base in Sevastopol to the presidents of the two countries to consider.

The Russian side, in breach of the reached agreements, refers to a recent speech by Russian president Boris Yeltsin in Krasnodar, where he once again made the signing of a Ukrainian-Russian comprehensive treaty subject to the solving of the problem of the division of the Black Sea Fleet.

The Ukrainian Defense Ministry is drafting a special statement protesting against the actions of the Russian Defense Ministry. The Volodymyr Ohryzko, head of the administration for foreign policy issues, commented on the situation: "We cannot and will not forgo our national interests. There are objective conditions for Yeltsin's visit since Russia's interest in signing a bilateral treaty is no smaller than Ukraine's. Therefore one should hope that Boris Yeltsin's visit to Ukraine will take place soon."

Ukraine: Last Group of Peacekeepers Sent to Slavonia

LD1704143596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0922 GMT 17 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Galina Nekrasova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] LVOV, April 17 — The last, forth, group of Ukrainian peacekeepers from tank forces left the Ukrainian town of Yarov, the Carpathian military district, for eastern Slavonia on Wednesday, Ukrainian Defense Ministry officials told Itar-Tass.

The servicemen will join the reserve units of the UN peacekeeper headquarters and will be deployed near the town of Clis in eastern Slavonia.

The Ukrainian force of 150 people and 11 T-72 tanks is subordinated to the UN command, but not to the NATO international forces. The 240th Ukrainian peacekeer battalion in Sarajevo is subordinated to the French command now. Aside from the tank unit, there are also an Ukrainian squadron of transport helicopters and 10 Ukrainian fire support helicopters, Mi-24 and Mi-120, in eastern Slavonia.

Ukraine: Journalist Meets Nuclear Traders in Odessa

MM1704131696 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 17 Apr 96 pp 1,2

[Report by Yevgeniy Strigunov: "Nuclear Death Sold by Weight. Sensational Results of KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA Experiment"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Odessa/Moscow — "We have no grounds for talking about the existence of a nuclear materials 'black market' in the world," Joseph Pilat, representative of the U.S. Los Alamos National Laboratory nonproliferation and international security department, said at a press conference. KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA's special correspondent repudiates the complacent view of the well-known U.S. expert.

Rumors that we have a small but well organized network of underground traders in rare-earth and radioactive materials have been around for a long time. I spent a long time unsuccessfully trying to contact professional nuclear materials merchants, because of the secrecy.

I had a stroke of luck. At a party I was introduced to a tall, 50-year-old man. The person introducing me whispered that he was a "middleman." Valeriy was cautious, so the conversation was somewhat desultory and I did not really believe his promise to "call if something comes up." Then suddenly, four months later, there was a call.

"OK, let's go. Be on Grecheskaya Street at one in the afternoon." A dirty old "Zhiguli" rolled up five minutes late. "Get in." We drove in the direction of Bolshoy Fontan, but, strangely enough, not on the highway overlooking the sea, but along the back roads between the dachas.

We took a turn and drove through open gates onto a tarmac area outside a two-story house. Apparently the rear yard of a sanatorium or recreation center, tightly ringed by dacha cooperatives.

There were four people in the double room. It was the middle of the afternoon, but two were still in bed. It was clearly not a "deluxe" room.

All four wore the uniform of the Russian on a business trip — a crumpled tracksuit. A stocky, bald man of about 40 got up from a chair:

"Hello. I'm Tolik." The others also made an effort to rise, offering limp handshakes: "Volodya, Lesha, Andrey."

According to the story concocted by those who got me introduced to the quartet, I was a representative of a Near East firm interested in buying radioactive substances.

Tolya [Tolik] proffered a certificate. He offered me some radium — a silvery metal in a lead-coated vacuum capsule.

Diameter — 0.8 [unit not stated], K=4 [letter K as transliterated; possibly "Curie"]. Type — Radium-226 sources. Ra-226 isotope with half-life of 1,617 years. Content of main material — 99.9 percent. Density — 5.9 grams per square centimeter. Melting point — 960 degrees C. Alpha-radiation energy — 4.7 MeV [million electron-volts]. Gamma-radiation energy — 0.18 MeV.

"Is it for sale?" Tolya shrugged his shoulders: "Sure." "The price?" "$8,000 per gram." "How much radium do you have?" "Six grams." "Do I have to buy the whole lot or can I buy one or two grams?" I said, slipping into the role of a customer. "As you wish." "The price is high."

"Is delivery included in the price? I don't want the radium in Odessa." "No, that is not my business," Tolya retorted. "My job is to deliver it inside Ukraine. But you certainly don't need to worry about it being sent on — I don't think getting things out of Odessa is a problem at the moment."

"Perhaps you are interested in strontium too? I've got some strontium-90." [speaker not identified]

"How much strontium?" "Forty grams." "The price?" "$35,000 per gram." "Do you have the actual goods or just a piece of paper?" He smiled condescendingly and pulled out from under the bed a sports bag containing all manner of junk. He was ages rummaging around in it, and then he produced a box wrapped in a strip of cloth, similar to a film cartridge, but slightly thicker and heavier.

Alik [diminutive of Aleksandr, presumably the person referred to above as "Lesha"] unscrewed something and then pressed a button, and there emerged from the cylinder a capsule containing a substance vaguely resembling metal filings. The dosimeter I had taken along immediately registered radiation at least 200 times above normal. A contented Alik hid the capsule.

"Convinced?" Right up until the last moment I thought I was involved in some kind of hoax. There I was, somewhere in Bolshoy Fontan in an untidy room being offered strategic raw materials for sale. And in amounts sufficient to cause a minor Hiroshima...

"We will be in Odessa for another two days," Tolik added. "So you'll have to decide quickly...." First I contacted a physicist I knew. He confirmed what the sportsmen had said and what they had shown me. **That is, radium, atomic weight 226. The commonest isotope is radium-226. Its half-life is 1,620 years. It emits alpha-, beta-, and gamma-rays, and, when mixed with beryllium, neutrons. It is a radiological hazard.**

Strontium, atomic weight 87.6, melting point 769 degrees. A stable isotope is used in the manufacture of television screens. The radioactive isotope strontium-90 has a half-life of 28 years and is obtained in nuclear explosions (that is the one I was shown). It emits beta particles. It endangers the health.

If, say, you were to attach a grenade to a cylinder of strontium and explode it, all living things within a radius of 1 km would receive a fatal dose of radiation. Even concrete slabs are no protection against strontium.

It is no great secret that traders in radioactive materials are trying to find a buyer for their goods in southern Ukraine. There are several major ports there, via which it is easy to take freight out of the country. If you try you can find a rich customer there. Actually, buyers themselves travel to Odessa in search of such materials.

Both Arab and Chechen groupings are "represented" there.

In August 1993 four people were arrested in the port of Kherson trying to take a container of cesium-137 on board a Bulgarian ship. The investigation established that the goods were to go to Libya via Bulgaria. In December 1993, in the trading port of Odessa, internal affairs administration transport officers arrested a group that was trying to sell two containers of uranium. One contained 1,200 grams, the other 300 grams. They were asking $400,000 for the small container. And uranium, among other things, is the raw material for plutonium.

According to the investigation's data, the uranium on sale in Odessa had been brought from Chisinau. It had gone there from Kustanay Oblast, where there is a mining and enriching combine extracting uranium for the military and nuclear industry. According to current information, a total of five kilograms of uranium had been made ready for sale. We do not know its current whereabouts.

A year ago, in January 1995, Ukrainian Security Service officers arrested four people in Kiev.

I was unable to establish where "my" foursome had gotten such a quantity of radioactive material, each milligram of which is supposed to be accounted for. According to people in the know, the material could have been stolen from a facility in the "Yuzhmash" complex — a defense enterprise which only recently was assembling intermediate-range missiles, including ones with nuclear warheads. The fact that two of the four had come from Dnepropetrovsk, where "Yuzhmash" is based, indirectly confirms this theory.

But it is not inconceivable that the dangerous commodity could have been brought from Russia or Belarus. On 19 August [as published] the heads of state of the "big eight" — possessors of nuclear weapons — are to meet to discuss questions of radiological security. Naturally, nuclear weapons will be a topic of discussion. But the activities of underground traders in radioactive materials will also be on the discussion agenda. In a sense, the "strontium workers" are more dangerous today than all the nuclear missiles put together; after all, nuclear weapons have been under rigorous monitoring for a long time. But it is impossible nowadays to trace where the stolen radioactive materials go when they leave the territory of the former USSR, who will use them, and what for.

Stop Press

According to information from reliable sources, the traders in radioactive materials whom our correspondent met with were offering weapons-grade plutonium for sale a few days ago.

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